

The Nation

Vol. XXI, No. 11.]
Registered as a Newspaper.

SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 1917.

[PRICE 6D.
Postage: U.K. 3d.; Abroad 1d.]

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Events of the Week.

THE Entente has at length carried out in Greece the coup which the Venizelists and their friends have for long urged upon it. It has deposed King Constantine, expelled him from the kingdom, and procured from him, under the stress of a military demonstration, the nomination of his second son, Alexander, as his successor. We know as yet only in part the events which led up to this stroke. The chief objection to the forcible deposition of the King came in the past from Italy, which did not wish to see Greece a member of the Allied Coalition. She has, however, now secured herself in Epirus, has proclaimed a protectorate over Albania, and has even occupied the town of Jannina. That town was assigned to Greece by the Conference of London in 1912, and though the whole of Epirus is mainly Albanian by race, Jannina itself is chiefly Greek and Vlach. Thus secure in the possession of the domain which she claims for herself, Italy seems to have withdrawn her opposition to the King's removal. As a preliminary step, France and Britain nominated M. Jonnart, ex-Governor of Algeria, their "High Commissioner" in Greece. It is not quite clear whether Russia, the third "Protecting Power" has adhered to this arrangement.

THE urgent question which led up to the deposition was that of the Thessalian harvest. So far as we know, the late King had carried out the terms of the Allied Ultimatum, had surrendered his guns, and withdrawn his army to the Morea. The blockade, however, was maintained, and Greek official figures reported some

scores of deaths from hunger. For relief, the King looked to the ripening crops of Thessaly, enough to feed his diminished kingdom for six months. The first act of M. Jonnart was to demand for the Allies control of this harvest. This was the "knock-out blow," for it meant the total starvation of Greece, and it was backed by the march of Allied troops into Thessaly, while other contingents were ready to land. We record the facts, and add to them only the remark that we do not understand on what reading of international right we lay claim to the Thessalian harvest. The suggestion that the King was going to sell it to Germany is improbable. His own people were starving, and the Allies held all the roads by sea and land from Thessaly to the enemy.

THE friends of M. Venizelos assume that we shall now restore the Constitution, re-unite the two halves of the kingdom, and place the whole under the direction of M. Venizelos. Our own reading of events is that the decline of his prestige was due mainly to our various acts of coercion. Whether Greek opinion will now rally to him remains to be seen. The King had a large following not so much because he was pro-German as because he stood for Greek neutrality and Greek independence against foreign intervention. Can a Greek Chamber act freely while we control the food of the country, censor the posts, command the police, and exercise through a High Commissioner a general political and military surveillance?

THE most destructive air-raid that has yet been made upon this country took place on Wednesday. About fifteen aeroplanes crossed the Essex coast at 11 a.m., and, flying at a height of from two to three miles, rapidly approached London in two squadrons. Bombs began to fall on the Eastern outskirts of the city at 11.30. Various parts of the East End received numerous bombs, and one which burst in a ground-floor schoolroom caused a number of casualties among tiny children. Three died on the spot; four succumbed later, and there were about twenty injured, more or less seriously. One bomb struck a train as it entered a station, killing seven people and injuring seventeen others. A number of warehouses were damaged, and fires were caused. Within the city the bulk of the damage and also of the thirty-six casualties occurred in a much frequented thoroughfare, where a corner four-story block of buildings was struck. In the ruined premises a search is still being made for a number of missing people. A great part of the damage was slight in character, being chiefly restricted to broken windows. Immediately after the bombs had fallen there were numbers of people offering their services in any capacity. Omnibuses were used as ambulances, and there was no trace of panic. Indeed, a few hours after the raid, curious crowds were drifting about the City to see the damage.

BOMBS were dropped near North Foreland, and on the opposite bank of the Thames, causing a few casualties. The total casualties were 527, including 104 killed, 154 seriously injured, and 269 slightly injured. There were 120 children killed

or injured. There are in addition a number of people still missing. Despite the large area over which the raiders operated, the injury to various buildings, and the heavy casualty list, there was no damage of a naval or military nature. When the German *communiqué* refers to London as a "fort," it is using a term that might be quite as fitly applied to almost any settlement in any belligerent country, and the enemy cannot evade his responsibility for so heavy a civilian death-roll. It is a graver thing that though the raiders were engaged by guns and were attacked by a number of aeroplanes of the Royal Flying Corps and Royal Naval Air Service, only one was brought down. The guns, however, probably caused a number of the casualties among the people in the street. It is certainly remarkable that the German raiders were able to remain over England for sixty to ninety minutes, and emerge almost scathless from the anti-aircraft guns and our own aeroplanes. No doubt the Germans wish to produce a condition of things under which the Government will be urged to weaken our aerial force at the front in order to cope with the raiders. And they will achieve some success unless the problem is attacked with more vigor and initiative. Another raid was attempted on Thursday, but the raiders were apparently headed off.

THE Note in which the Russian Government communicated its own war-aims to the Allies, and asked for a definition of theirs has not yet been published. Three of the replies have been issued this week. That of our Government is brief. It denies that we entered the war for conquest. We are fighting "to liberate populations oppressed by alien tyranny." Our aims are those defined by Mr. Wilson in his message to Congress. Then follows the one definite passage—we are ready to re-examine the agreements concluded among the Allies, and if necessary to revise them. The French Note is the most definite and the most militant of the three. France "intends that her faithful and loyal provinces of Alsace and Lorraine, which were snatched from her in the past by violence, shall be liberated, and shall return to her." She asks also for "reparatory indemnities," and for "the chastisement" of the authors of the crimes of this war. Mr. Wilson's Note adds nothing to his former utterances, but its tone is moderate and reassuring, and is evidently meant to meet the honest theoretical difficulties of the Russians.

AMERICA, declares Mr. Wilson, is fighting for no selfish object of her own, but for the liberation of peoples everywhere from the aggressions of autocratic force. The *status quo ante* must not be restored unaltered, for out of it sprang this iniquitous war. But all our readjustments must follow a principle. No people must be forced under an alien sovereignty against its will, no territory change hands save to assure the liberty of its inhabitants, no indemnities be imposed except as payment for manifest wrongs done, and no readjustments of power enforced save to secure the world's future peace. The day has come to conquer or submit; we must stand together for liberty and victory. The effect of these Notes has, we fear, been small. The organ of the Workers' Council finds them wholly unsatisfactory. It thinks Mr. Wilson nebulous, and is particularly hostile to M. Ribot. Clearly, all the Notes are too vague. Formulæ are capable of almost any application. What is needed is a far more definite statement of war-aims, negative as well as positive. If we want to win Russian assent to our disinterested purposes, we must jettison our Imperialist aims, and that in plain words. The Russians will not think seriously about Alsace, so long as they know that the same formulæ are made to cover the annexation of the German Colonies, and of Mesopotamia, Syria, and Smyrna. There are signs that M. Kerensky is achieving some success in restoring discipline. But separatist tendencies in Finland and the Ukraine are causing much anxiety. The Socialists are still in the ascendant (they have just carried the municipal elections in Petrograd), and among them the Left Wing seems to be gaining ground.

ON Sunday some members of the Sailors' and

Firemen's Union refused to man the vessel on which Mr. Ramsay MacDonald and Mr. F. W. Jowett had embarked for Russia. This action was the result of an agitation led by Captain Tupper and Mr. Havelock Wilson, who declared that the representatives of the Union had been insulted at the Leeds Conference when they asked that compensation for the families of merchant sailors who had lost their lives through the submarine campaign should be demanded from Germany. On Monday the matter came up in the House of Commons in a debate on the grant of passports to the I.L.P. delegates. Mr. Bonar Law made it clear that any refusal of passports would have had a grave effect on our relations with the Russian democracy, who had specially asked for delegates representative of our "Minority" Socialists. Now that the Sailors' and Firemen's Union have made their protest, it is to be hoped they will allow the delegates to proceed. Any other course would mean that the Union claims the right to override the decision of the Government and the Foreign Office, and that could not possibly be tolerated.

THE battle in which Wyttschaete or Messines Ridge, was captured a week ago is not only the greatest British success, but the greatest victory achieved by any army in the time during the siege war. The Ridge gives observation of the Plain of Lille, which lies to the south-east. While it remained in the hands of the enemy it overlooked the Ypres salient, forming itself an indentation in the British lines. But the capture of the Ridge does more than relieve the Ypres salient; it affords positions from which all the ground north and north-east of Lille may be overlooked. It is difficult to see how the Germans could be threatened more seriously than by this weakening of the focus of their hold upon Flanders. The Allied offensive has all through attempted to reduce the German plans to nothing. Thus the blow at the Craonne Ridge was meant to break, as ultimately it must, the whole of the German line east of St. Quentin. The blow astride the Scarpe was to turn the Siegfried or "Hindenburg" line. If the Germans wished to retire further in France, Lille was their chosen pivot. To threaten Lille is to undermine the whole plan, and compel a more drastic change. The recent success has, therefore, a strategic bearing which it is important to note. There were captured 7,342 men and 145 officers, 46 guns, 242 machine-guns, and 60 trench mortars. Much material was also destroyed in the bombardment.

THE counter-attack was delayed for over thirty hours, a significant witness to the completeness of the victory. And it failed to regain the ground. On the other hand, the British have developed their success, advancing east and north-east of Messines to Gapaard, which they secured on Tuesday. The enemy seems now to be readjusting his line north of the Lys; and it is clear that below Gapaard the Germans are gravely handicapped by the nearness of the river to their rear. But at present there is no indication of the scope of the retirement, and the British are resolutely following up. The battle made use of some novel instruments. A developed form of tank was used with great success; there were huge hot-oil sprays, and the mine explosions with which the battle was opened were so great that they were registered on the Milne seismographs at Shide Observatory. On the rest of the battle-front there has been little activity, though the Italians won a distinct tactical success by their capture of Mount Ortegara and the Agnello Pass in the Trentino. They were able to secure 512 prisoners on this occasion. The head of the United States Army, General Pershing, arrived with his staff in England at the end of last week, and has now left for France.

It is just possible to guess that large events are happening in Spain. The short-lived Cabinet under Señor Prieto has given way to another under the moderate Conservative leader, Señor Dato; but this fragment of news only conceals the real meaning of the crisis. There is at work a movement among Spanish officers which recalls the Young Turk conspiracy, or perhaps more nearly the

Greek Officers' revolt. The regimental officers of the infantry have formed a League primarily to insist on army reform. They complain that the present military oligarchy has allowed the army to become hopelessly inefficient. It is without guns or munitions, and seems to exist chiefly to provide sinecures for a few families of the ruling caste. From professional grievances, this officers' movement has passed to the assertion of a quasi-democratic position, and, significantly enough, its chief seat is Barcelona. The late Government fell because it had made a vain attempt to suppress the Infantry League, which resulted only in bringing out the cavalry and artillery to its support. The officers can probably enforce military reform, but the real interest of their movement lies in its possible political bearings. They may move on to demand constitutional reconstruction, and possibly a line of foreign policy more in sympathy with that of Latin America.

THE news of the Hungarian crisis circulated last week turns out to have been inaccurate. It is true that Count Andrássy has failed to form a Cabinet. He had to face the majority of Count Tisza's supporters in the Diet, and his personal relations with the late Premier are so bad that his Cabinet could not have controlled the House. By a wholly unexpected choice, Count Esterházy has been selected to form a Ministry. He is a comparatively young man, widely popular, who finished his education at Oxford, and since he is personally friendly with M. Tisza, it is thought that he may manage to guide the Diet. He belongs to the Opposition, but presumably not to its extremest wing. It remains to be seen whether a really democratic Franchise Bill can be produced in these odd conditions. The solution reached is, however, preferable to the appointment of Baron Burian.

It was made known on Saturday last that Major Redmond had given his life for the cause of the Allies, and rendered his last service to the cause of Ireland. He died at the head of his men in a successful charge on Wytshaete Wood, and of the two Divisions that shared in the glory of that victory one was Nationalist, the other Ulster. It was an Ulster ambulance that carried the Nationalist leader from the field of battle. No scene could be imagined more eloquent of the spirit in which he made his last appeal in the House of Commons, and this brave and generous patriot could not have wished for a happier or more honorable ending to his life.

On Monday the House of Commons, fresh from the news of this touching incident of the war, met to hear the Prime Minister make a statement on the Irish Convention. From Mr. Lloyd George's sketch of the composition of the Convention, it is clear that the Government recognize the importance of making that body as comprehensive as possible. The Nationalist Party, the Ulster Unionists, the Irish Unionist Alliance, and the Sinn Féiners are each to have five representatives. Mr. O'Brien is to nominate two members. It is clear from the figures that the Nationalist Party is prepared to make great sacrifices for the sake of unity, and the Government owe that party real gratitude for its moderation. Four Catholic Bishops, two Protestant Bishops, and the Moderator of the Irish Presbyterian Assembly are to represent religion; the Chambers of Commerce of Dublin, Belfast and Cork, the Trade Councils in Dublin and Cork, and the Trade Unions in Belfast are to send delegates. Each county council and each county borough is to send its Chairman, and the smaller urban areas are to be represented by two delegates from each province. The Government will nominate fifteen leading Irishmen, and the total number will be 101. We hope that every effort will be made to bring the Sinn Féiners into the deliberations.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION has suffered a check in Parliament, but its friends have only the more reason to do their utmost to save it. On Monday Captain Jessel moved to instruct the Boundary Commission to proceed with its work on the assumption that proportionalism is not adopted. The debate on Tuesday was not of first-rate

interest. Sir F. E. Smith, Mr. Roberts, Mr. J. M. Robertson, Lord Hugh Cecil, and (half-heartedly) Mr. Samuel supported proportionalism. Its opponents were undistinguished. No Leader of either party spoke. In the division only half the House voted, and the hostile instruction was carried by 149 to 141. The division lists show that all parties are divided. The question, of course, is not yet settled. Clause 15 has yet to be considered, and the House is not bound by this indecisive vote. The amount of inconvenience caused by a reversal of the instruction to the Boundary Commission need not be very serious. The debate showed clearly that some members may withdraw their consent to the whole compromise on which the Bill is based if Proportional Representation is withdrawn.

LAST Wednesday the Government forced through the House of Commons the financial resolution pledging the taxpayers to payments of unknown magnitude to landlords and farmers under the Corn Production Bill. The House was really impotent and the debate futile, for Mr. Law informed his audience that the Government had already given a pledge which covered the demand for which they asked a formal endorsement from the House. To such a depth has Parliamentary government sunk! The Government furnished no reply to the destructive criticism which Mr. Runciman and others brought to bear. It was admitted that the man who broke up fresh land to grow wheat under the Government demand ought to have compensation if his act turned out to be unremunerative. But this measure gives doles to men who neither require nor merit such a guarantee, and apportions the money so as to get the minimum of benefit from it.

It is difficult to be very sanguine about the prospect of the Labor Inquiry. We should have thought that the Government could have found a more expeditious method than the old triangular inquiry. A Commission of three, representing employers and employed, with a neutral chairman, is a proper body for a judicial investigation, but in this case what is necessary is that the Government should ascertain the facts. There are good men on some of the Labor Commissions, but on the whole they are not a particularly strong team.

MEANWHILE negotiations are in progress between the Ministry of Munitions and the A.S.E. officials on the form and scope of the new Munitions Bill. It is clear, from Dr. Addison's speech on Wednesday, that Ministers recognize that it is imperative to remove the suspicions which have been caused by the haste of the Ministry to pass a Bill which affects vitally the interests of the trade unions. We gather from Dr. Addison's speech that the Government hope to succeed in their difficult task. The range of their inquiry, we learn from Mr. Lloyd George's speech, is to include profiteering. We do not know whether they will be allowed to discuss the Government's responsibility in connection with the relation of taxation to prices. We presume that they will be allowed to examine the Government officials, and to probe to the bottom all the suspicions that have gathered round the use of secret agents. It is insisted that the inquiry should be real and sincere, and that it should be recognized by the workmen.

In extending the principle of dilution to commercial work, the Government will recognize the right to strike in that department of work. Other important concessions, which ought clearly to have been part of the Bill as originally drafted, promised that the right to continue dilution shall cease on the termination of war, with a heavy penalty on any recalcitrant employer. Dilution is not to be introduced in private work, except after notice and consultation with the workmen. Leaving certificates are to be abolished. It is clear that the Government are awake now to the necessity of regaining the confidence of the workmen, and we hope that the discussion of the new Bill will not be hurried or secret. It is much better for the Ministry to find out what the men want by the methods of peace than by those of war.

Politics and Affairs.

THE ANSWERS TO RUSSIA.

THREE of the Allies have now answered the Russian summons for a re-definition of our war-aims. The effect will not be measurable to-day or to-morrow, and one may question whether any Notes, however clear or eloquent, will make much impression on the confusion which the autocracy caused by its fall. We do not even now feel sure that we know precisely what the Russians meant by the formula, "No annexations, no indemnities." When we turn for light to the newspapers of the parties which now control Russia, the riddle is no nearer a solution. The Social-Democratic (Minority) "Labor Gazette" is prepared to contemplate extensive territorial changes, but only as a sequel to *plébiscites*. Its scheme for indemnities is the creation by all the belligerents of a common fund to be distributed in all the devastated areas. It is doubtful, however, whether these constructive schemes reflect the dominant mind of the Revolution. It seems to be thinking on very much more elementary lines. It wants the earliest possible general peace, and we question whether there is a single territorial claim, beyond the restoration of Belgium, France, and Serbia, on which it is prepared to insist. The British Note recalls, very skilfully, the early proclamation of the original Provisional Government, which insisted on the reunion of the three fragments of Poland. Here certainly was an annexation, and one as difficult to bring about as it is just in itself. That proclamation, however, belonged to the Miliukoff era. We question whether the Workmen's Council or the Socialist half of the present Ministry has the faintest intention of fighting on until Poland is re-united. The official organ of the Petrograd Council (Isvestija) has made its meaning almost brutally clear. In an address to the Western Powers, it has announced that it "will not allow a single man to be sacrificed, in order to satisfy our demands for the righting of historic wrongs. . . . It will not allow the war to be prolonged for a single day in order to alter any frontier whatever." As for the liberation of the oppressed, it looks, for that result, to peace and not to war. Plainly, then, there are Russians, and those the men who seem to control the country to-day, who do mean by "no annexations," flatly and simply, the return to the *status quo* of 1914.

Our public opinion has not faced with sufficient frankness what the consequences of the persistence of this attitude in Russia must be. We have been slow to believe in the risk of a separate peace. It is not what any of these Russian Socialist groups intend or desire, and to most of them it would seem a repugnant disloyalty. None the less, if Russia means what they say, if it will not fight in order to alter any of the old frontiers or the redress of any of the historic wrongs, what will be its reaction to the large programme of changes described in Mr. Wilson's Note, sketched in the briefer British Note, and defined in the plain words, Alsace-Lorraine, in the French Note? The two positions cannot be reconciled. We gather from Mr. Bonar Law's speech on Monday that he regards the danger of a separate peace as still real, and evidently Mr. Henderson was anxious for the assistance of Mr. MacDonald to convince the Workers' Council that a separate peace would be treachery. The Russians themselves feel that, but for how long will any people continue to shed its blood out of loyalty to others, for ends that do not commend themselves to its own mind? The telegrams describe the partial success of the heroic efforts of M. Kerensky to restore discipline at the front. He has a gigantic task before him, a task beyond the powers of any one man, however magnetic. Meanwhile, the Revolution retains its suspicions of the Imperialism of the Western Powers, and the habitual argument of its press is that there is little or nothing to choose between Britain and Germany. This mood has been fed by some astonishing mistakes of our officials towards returning exiles. One very influential revolutionary veteran, M. Trotsky, on his way home from the United States to Russia, was held up for a month at Halifax, and interned as a prisoner in a

camp for Germans. Can we wonder if his belated return leads to demonstrations against ourselves? The impediments originally placed on the visit of British and French "Minority" Socialists to Russia and the holding up of Mr. MacDonald can only deepen the impression which is growing at Petrograd, that there is no real identity of spirit between us and the Russians. Even if Russia makes no separate peace (and this we still think unlikely), the sort of truce imposed by her inability to strike is only a little less disabling. We reckon, after long delays, on American aid which will balance the loss of Russia's positive contribution. That prospect has already begun to alarm America. The "New Republic," facing this situation for the first time in its issue of May 19th, reckons that no American army fit to replace the loss of Russia's striking force can be ready before 1919, and it goes on to comment as follows:—

"It is an appalling outlook and it will go ill with the men responsible for the Government which brings consequences of this kind to the American people. The result would almost certainly be a revolution in America far more bloody and drastic than the revolution in Russia."

This may sound alarmist, and we think it unduly pessimistic, but it is wiser to face facts squarely than to drift amid phrases.

A situation of this kind cannot be altered appreciably by any Notes, however cogent and tactful. If Russia is to become once more an effective partner of the Alliance, it will be only after a difficult and probably lengthy period of internal wrestling and self-discipline. What we hope for, what we must work for, is the triumph in Russia of men like M. Kerensky, who ardently desire a disinterested peace by negotiation, but realize that no good peace can emerge from a military situation which leaves Prussia dominant. The diplomacy of the Western Allies may actively assist such men to assert and maintain their influence, but it can also render their task hopeless. It will not be easy to convince these sceptical and academic Russian Socialists that the future peace of the world depends on the solution at the settlement of such questions as that of Alsace-Lorraine. It will be quite impossible to carry conviction to their minds unless we sharply distinguish such questions as this from claims which seem to them to spring from mere Imperialism. The French Note is a challenging assertion of the claim to the lost provinces as the legitimate property of France, and it does not try to meet the Russian Socialists, who think that such a transfer requires a *plébiscite* to justify it. Our own Note, much more moderate in tone than the French, is too vague to effect much. Mr. Wilson alone has really tried to address himself to this critical Russian audience. He has grasped its point of view, and his answer goes some way to satisfy it. He can say without qualification that America seeks neither territorial gains nor indemnities. He has put the case well against any return in Europe to the *status quo* of 1914. He has also defined in careful and deliberate formulae the grounds on which changes ought to be made. His statement is unexceptionable, but it is necessarily general. He cannot speak for the other Allies, and no formulae can meet the baffling difficulty that every Power which wants to make an annexation invariably claims that it is acting only in the interests of the population concerned, or under the pressing dictates of the need of security. If we hope to persuade the Russians that there is a good case for insisting on a trenchant solution of the few really urgent claims of nationality, we must sharply distinguish them from other more interested ends. Until we say plainly, "We do not ask you to go on fighting in order to enable us to add Mesopotamia, Palestine, and the German Colonies to our Empire, nor to establish Italy in Smyrna, nor yet to dismember Austria-Hungary," we shall not succeed in convincing them of our sincerity elsewhere. It does not help us, when in the midst of this argument, Italy, of her own motion, proclaims a protectorate over Albania. Russian Socialism is a difficult factor to weld into the Alliance, but the difficulty comes from the presence in the Alliance of an Imperialistic amalgam. If we alienate the effective support of Russia

because we will not repudiate these interested aims, we must not reckon on their being more acceptable to America. The more we rely on her aid, the greater becomes her influence on the settlement. Her attitude is more tolerant, more experienced, more adult, than that of our candid revolutionary friends in Russia; but she, too, dislikes Imperialism, and she does not believe in the knock-out blow. The "New Republic" urges Mr. Wilson to resume his diplomatic work. "He must seek for a peace by means of diplomacy, irrespective of a military decision, and based on an organization for joint security, while at the same time making allowance for failure by maintaining and even intensifying his preparation for fighting." That is good advice, and it is equally salutary for us all.

THE MEANING OF MESSINES.

In the general order of the day commemorating the victory of Messines Ridge, Sir Douglas Haig states that "the great success gained has brought us a long step nearer to the final victorious end of the war." Orders of the day are often couched in language more calculated to hearten the troops than to give the critic a balanced view of events. Frequently they are a revelation of the *moral* of the army and of the designs of its leaders that cannot be published without prejudice to the civilians' confidence. Of such a character was the German order captured after the first counter-attack which aimed at the recovery of the important ridge. The order insisted on the absolute necessity of regaining the lost positions, and in this way it affords us a fair gauge of the importance attached by the enemy to Messines Ridge, and, since nothing was achieved, also of his impotence. On the other hand, an examination of the recent battle in all its bearing serves to show the exact propriety of Sir Douglas Haig's words.

It is easy and natural to seize upon this or that detail of the battle as being the cause of the completeness of the success; and it is also natural, though irrational, to identify the deciding factor with some part of the *mechanical* framework of a modern battle. But the victory was none the less directly and properly attributable to the rational and directive factor. Sir Douglas Haig was at pains to emphasize the important help given by all the arms and instruments of modern war. And this is to place the battle in its true light; for, like the victory of Vimy Ridge, it was a triumph not of artillery, aerial reconnaissance, mines, or tanks, nor even of the synchrony of artillery and infantry work; but of that just and measured co-ordination of all factors which constitutes mastery. General von Armin, who was in charge of the defeated German Army, has analyzed the detail of such battles in a report which achieved a great notoriety at the time it was discovered by the Allied Staff. The criticism of the Allied and German tactics was calm and thorough, and no detail of the opening of the Battle of the Somme was neglected. But no one can read the report with its numerous sub-divisions and sub-heads without appreciating more fully the vast complexity of the instrument which the modern general wields.

Yet, at the outset, it is a remarkable and not insignificant detail that it was the very general who had the experience of the Battle of the Somme, and was able to weigh and sift its lessons so dispassionately, who suffered so complete a defeat on the Messines Ridge. His report elaborated new arrangements for almost every department of battle control. The exact reserves of ammunition were specified, and fresh tactics were suggested for combating the effect of modern bombardment. In spite of all this, in spite of the lessons of Vimy Ridge two months ago, General von Armin was beaten more thoroughly than any general in the Battle of the Somme, and as completely as the Germans at Vimy Ridge. The factor of surprise was almost completely absent. Messines Ridge gave such effective observation over the British lines that little could be done in daylight without being seen by the enemy.

That was in fact the main importance of the ground. It constituted a watch tower in the midst of the British defences. It is not surprising, therefore, that anyone who wished could read in the German *communiqués* the suggestions as to the next point of attack. Nor can we say that the Germans had any pronounced inferiority, if any at all, in numbers. They boasted that they had ample reserves. They certainly had a great accumulation of guns. The inactivity on the Russian front had enabled them to withdraw part of their armament, and its appearance on the Western Front was most timely. It is true that the German aerial reconnaissance was greatly inferior. The enemy has been confessing this with considerable frankness by raiding this country. But positions like Messines Ridge gave a sufficiently good view of the immediate neighborhood, and, of course, every point of the German lines had long been ranged accurately. Yet, in the result, Sir Herbert Plumer gained a complete victory. He proved beyond any doubt that he could do what Generals Horne, Allenby, Gough, and Rawlinson had done, and in so doing he made clear to the world that the British Army has now learned its lesson. Not merely a part, but the whole of the Army has developed a tactical competence that is now equal to that of any army in the field.

But there is a further moral in the success. It is not only that the British Army has proved its ability to seize any position, however important, however highly fortified, in spite of a lack of surprise. The victory, following upon that of Vimy Ridge, proves that, in that constant flux of things which gives the ascendancy, now to this arm or weapon, now to that, now to the defensive, now to the offensive, for the moment the offensive is supreme, within limits. For a long time the defensive defied attack, and many came to think that Bloch was right in his predictions. Now it is clear that the appropriate means of attack have been discovered, and that the limited offensive can be made almost mathematically certain. The losses in the recent battle were considerably higher on the German side than on the British—three or four to one, perhaps—and the proposed objectives were all gained. Such or similar results can always be gained when the objectives are not too extensive for detailed study. A certain depth of enemy ground can be ranged, for instance, in such detail that any given spot can be wiped out at need; but such cover cannot be afforded beyond that depth, for the artillery will not be sufficiently near and ranged with sufficient accuracy. The ascendancy will pass to the German artillery, which has all its hinterland ranged. At a certain point, this again will pass, for the artillery will be so near that it will be under threat of immediate capture, and to avoid this it will be compelled to move away. Something of this sort will occur when the German line finally gives way, and the relation of the Messines victory to that end is not obscure.

The inactivity upon the Russian Front has thrown back the time when we may hope for decisive victory. With this postponement has had to go an abandonment of the strategy which had been decided upon for this year. To engage *à outrance* would have been a costly folly when once it was certain that Germany could regard her Eastern Front with some feeling of security. The Allies have now the most unified, brilliant, and dependable guidance. The general scheme is to repeat these carefully prepared restricted offensives at various parts of the battle-front—on the West, in Italy, and, if possible, in Russia, too. By degrees more and more of the Front will consist of improvised instead of two-year-old defences. Since the function of all defences is to economize men, more and more men will be drawn into the line, as more and more are being put out of the fight. The time will be drawing steadily nearer when the vast resources of the United States will become available, and our own reserves will be accumulating at the same time. Sooner or later the strain will become too great for the enemy to sustain every sector with equal force. As we gain possession of observation posts and develop our aerial supremacy, he will be more at the mercy of surprise. In consequence, some part of the line will weaken and give. Then the Allies will throw in their reserves, and the end will be near.

For the present, that may be a distant vista; but the approach to it is not without a certain inevitability. There is a sphere of development even in the limited offensive. Gapaard was taken on Tuesday, and there are other small gains that must come too. If the enemy offers a very strenuous resistance, the attack may be removed to some other sector. But the success on Messines Ridge shows that we have the versatility, vigor, and tactical ability to capture any position, and even show a considerable profit on the casualty list. In itself, it is one of the greatest victories in the history of warfare; but in its prospect it is even more welcome as carrying us "a long step nearer the final victorious end of the war."

IRELAND'S CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY.

BAGEHOT argued that we were good at working Parliamentary institutions because we were stupid, and that a clever people like the French or the Irish could only make a mess of them. As a nation, we affect a certain pride in our supposed want of imagination, and we are apt to think that more imaginative peoples show themselves immature and maladroit in the difficult business of life. All this is, as it were, a commonplace of our thinking; but is it true? We do not believe any people which went to war in the spirit of 1914 is without imagination or slow to respond to some spiritual appeal. It was not rapacity that filled the ranks of the greatest voluntary army the world has ever seen; it was not prudence or merely an instinct for self-preservation; it was a spirit of generous hope for mankind. That display impressed the popular consciousness in other countries as nothing else in the war has impressed it. May it remain our inspiration to the end!

The truth is that it is rather in our rulers than in the nation that this quality is lacking, and this has never been so true as it is to-day when imagination is as necessary to our statesmanship as courage is to a revolution. Many people who doubted last winter whether Mr. Lloyd George had precisely the gifts that were demanded by the war, hoped something from his Celtic temperament, believing that if a great moment came to him, he would know how to use it. Never has hope been so visibly disillusioned. For all the answer they provoked from our rulers, the Russian Revolution and the American declaration of war might have been the kind of event that happens, not once in a century, but once in a year. This week a third opportunity has come and gone. On the very eve of the Prime Minister's declaration to the House of Commons about the Irish Convention, the most popular Nationalist member fell leading Nationalist Ireland to victory in a gallant charge, and was carried from the battlefield on an Ulster ambulance. The House met under this softening shadow, and his most bitter opponent, with a past more bitter than any man in politics, spoke of the hope of an Irish peace. Sympathy and unity were the mood of politics, of Parliament, of the nation. Only one word was necessary from the Prime Minister to set the seal on this chivalrous and reconciling temper and to make the death of this patriot the symbol of a new concord in the Empire. But that word was unspoken. History will surely remark with astonishment of an incident which will pass into the legends of the Irish people, that the Prime Minister of a people fighting for the freedom of the world could not learn to speak that one word—amnesty. We assume that the release of the Sinn Féin prisoners can only be a matter of time, and that the Government do not intend that the Convention shall sit building the Ireland of the future with this skeleton in the cupboard, as if it were a German or a Hungarian Government. That is unthinkable. But it looks as though we mean to postpone this act of statesmanship to the last moment, and to perform it with the worst grace. Cannot Mr. Lloyd George learn something from the example of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman, who lives in history because he had the courage to say and to do the brave thing in the right hour?

It is unjust to the people of this country not to give the Convention every opportunity; for whatever may be

said of the crimes of the past to-day, at any rate the British nation is united in desiring to see Ireland one and at peace. No enterprise was ever launched with more general sympathy and good-will. The old rancours scarcely raise their head anywhere. The day when Ireland becomes a free, self-governing people will be welcomed scarcely less eagerly here than there. The difficulties that beset the Convention are formidable enough, and Englishmen have to recognize with sorrow that those difficulties are largely the legacy of our past conduct. It is because we were so anxious to set up an English garrison in Ulster that it is so hard to-day to make an Irish nation. All of our statesmen are implicated in the responsibilities for failure. But there are elements of hope in recent history. For if, on the one side, we are reminded of the schemes that have come to grief, their history goes to show, on the other, that Irishmen, in spite of their discords, can accomplish something when they come together. The case of the Recess Committee is reassuring. At a time when Irish politics were very bitter, and disappointment was acute, a few men of opposite politics were able to co-operate, with results that changed the whole face of their country. We might well wish that any set of Englishmen could do as much as the little group in which Sir Horace Plunkett and Mr. John Redmond took part, contrived to effect in providing a constructive policy for the agriculture of their country. From the deliberations of those years there has sprung almost all that is good or promising in the government of Ireland. The task to-day is greater, but the omens are more encouraging. For Ireland has been reanimated during the last twenty years by new movements of life and hope and memory in literature, history, and social outlook. These movements have checked what some Irishmen anticipated with such dread, that wasting disease which settles on a people that sees no future. They have had some tragical consequences, but the man who does not know Ireland to be the richer because Irishmen have sought in a hundred ways to keep the soul alive in their nation is unable to understand the deeper forces of the world. To-day these forces will help to build the Ireland of the future. The Convention, we trust, will not be a mere struggle between parties for half a county here and half a county there, nor a contest between religions for ascendancy and power. Men will sit and speak who are strangers to those conflicts, whose vision is uncolored by the traditions of that strife. In saying this, we do not, of course, depreciate the great and heroic part played by men like the Irish leader or Mr. Dillon in the long effort to awaken England to a sense of the claims of the Irish people. They stand in the line of succession from Grattan, O'Connell, and Parnell, without whom Ireland would never have learnt to express herself in such a way as to make England listen. But that political struggle is only part of the life of a people; and there is much to be expressed in the life of a nation for which Parliament, as we know it, cannot find the language. In one sense it is true that a political struggle for independence involves all the energies of a people. In another sense it is true that the very concentration necessary for success in such a struggle means that many aspects and many interests are inevitably obscured. Nobody can read such a book as Mr. Russell's "The National Being" without feeling that the great problem of the time is to secure to democracy, not in Ireland only, some medium more ample and pliant than the fixed forms and standard into which Parliamentary institutions are so liable to be forced. For this reason we welcome specially the prospect that men like Mr. Russell himself, the poet and prophet, and one who can speak for Labor, though not, unhappily, Ireland's greatest Labor leader, will take part in this national assembly. The co-operative movement belongs to modern Ireland as essentially as the No-Rent League and the Land War belonged to the Ireland of the last generation. Englishmen have too many difficulties of their own to think lightly of the problem with which Ireland has to deal, but it is at any rate with an air of sober hope that democrats will watch the fortunes of the Constituent Assembly.

"PROFITEERING" AND A CAPITAL LEVY.

WE are glad to learn from the Prime Minister's address to the Commission on Industrial Unrest that one of the subjects of their inquiry is "profiteering." That numbers of business men and investors should be making large sums of money out of the war rankles in the breast of the wage-earning classes. Some of our correspondents appear to think that the charge is either false in substance or that it comes with ill grace from workers whose money incomes have been proportionately raised by war conditions. But what are the facts? Although it would be absurd to suggest that the material wealth of the country in the shape of income or of capital has been increased by the most destructive war on record, it is by no means absurd to say that the money income and the monetary value of the capital have been increased. There is an overwhelming testimony to such increase. As for the income of the nation, average prices have more than doubled, and though some of this money goes abroad in high cost of food and materials, the great bulk of it is distributed in profits, interest, rent, and wages, to the different owners of the factors of production in this country. Can anybody doubt that both the wage-earning and the possessing classes have, upon the whole, been receiving great accessions to their incomes? But with regard to the rise in working-class incomes, two qualifying circumstances must be taken into account. Most of, and in many cases all, the rise is swallowed up by the higher cost of food and other necessities upon which working-class income is chiefly expended. Again, the higher working-class income is the product of a large increase of productive energy, given out by a larger number of contributors to the family income, and is attended by a great increase in the strain of labor. The large increase in the aggregate of profits is not equally subject to either qualification. It is "unearned" in the sense that it is not accompanied by any corresponding output of skill or effort on the part of its recipients, while a smaller proportion of it is absorbed in the higher prices for consumable commodities. This is our general case for the statement that the classes loosely styled capitalist have made large sums out of the war.

Another approach to the same result is got by inquiry into the cause of rise of prices. The admittedly high level of consumption and production during the war precludes the hypothesis that there has been any considerable actual shortage in supplies either of materials or foods, or of manufactured goods. The rise of prices is, therefore, mainly due to an abnormal increase or inflation of the currency. Everyone knows that this has been going on since the beginning of the war in all the belligerent and most of the neutral countries, and that it is largely responsible for the rise of prices in world markets. In Britain the inflation, though less reckless than in some other countries, has been large and is still growing. Uncovered Treasury Notes, the lavish issue of Treasury Bills, and other large reliance upon bank-made credit for the financing of war-loans, are the instruments of this inflation. It is, indeed, to inflation that the war-profiteering and the large increase of capital values which is going on are primarily due. For war-profiteering is not so much illicit squeezing by monopolists as is commonly supposed. Business men behave in war time as at other times. They always take what the conditions of the market allow. Ship-owners, coalowners, farmers, and others, who are placed temporarily in a strong bargaining position, no doubt make the most of it. But they are not to any large extent responsible for the rise of prices. They are simply the chief beneficiaries of the inflation which has set more money than usual in circulation. Moreover, it is often difficult to spot the acts of sale through which excessive profits are amassed, for the manufacturer or trader can usually adduce a plausible case for showing that his "costs" for labor, material, and so forth, are advancing as fast as the prices he gets.

Nevertheless, it is difficult for us to understand how our critics can deny that there has been profiteering on a large scale, and that the possessing classes will have gained in the monetary value of their property by the

war. High income tax, super tax, and excess profits tax have gone, of course, some way towards reducing the amount of these gains. But they have by no means absorbed the bulk of them. This is shown in many instances by the dividends paid tax-free, not only in shipping and other definitely war-industries, but in many industrial and trading companies. Of course, the vast majority of investors in businesses doing work for the Government (and more than half the firms of the country must be so engaged) have been making more money out of the war than they have been paying in war-taxes. Their prosperity is notorious. But not theirs alone. The industries unconnected with war-requisites, producing necessities and luxuries for the ordinary population, with more money to spend, have been doing unusually well. We will not cite selected cases of luxury trades. Agriculture, for example, is making large profits for farmers, very little of which is taken by taxation. The "Economist" for April 14th gave an analysis of the balance sheets of a large number of unselected industrial companies (omitting banks, mines, rails, and insurance) showing an average rate of net profit amounting to 8·7 per cent., with a considerable improvement on the corresponding period of last year. The same authority (June 9th) informs us that "During the war the Stores have had an amazingly prosperous time," while an earlier analysis of the accounts of branch shops shows an excellent result. As for banking, the financial mirror of our national trade, we are informed that "The banks have naturally benefited from the great activity of trade, and the year 1916 was a record as far as their profits are concerned" ("Economist," May 19th). Can anybody doubt that a Government which gives unlimited and unchecked spending power to officials in the Army, Navy, and Munitions, is engaged in piling up profits and monetary claims for well-placed business men? Shipping is, of course, an extreme instance. But it is illustrative of what has been going on to a less extent in scores of trades. Here is an instructive case communicated to the "Economist" (May 5th) by "a well-informed correspondent":—

"A firm owning tramp steamers appeared as a subscriber of over £700,000 to the War Loan. I asked how they came to possess so much loose money; the explanation given was that three steamers had been torpedoed. Further inquiries revealed the interesting fact that these steamers, worth some £9 a ton before the war, had been insured at the inflated war-value of £40 a ton at the then Government rate of two guineas per cent., and had been sent to the bottom. Hence, what the market calls a very profitable sale and £700,000 in War Loan Stock."

No wonder Mr. Bonar Law was able to inform the House that a number of shipping investments brought him in an average dividend, after payment of excess profits tax, of 47 per cent. Inflation of currency, doubling all monetary values, has doubled profits, and, though a share of the surplus has been taken in taxes, most of it has been available for lending to the Government at the high figure of five guineas per £100. How else do those who would deny war-profiteering explain how such large quantities of "real money" have been found for the borrowing processes by which four-fifths of the war expenditure has been defrayed? Patriotism does not of itself breed money. Some £2,500,000,000 have been lent to our Government (irrespective of the sales of securities and borrowing from America), and when this financial year runs out it is likely that the sum will not be much short of £4,000,000,000. From what sources will these enormous claims upon the present and future wealth of the country have come? A very small fraction from the savings and investment of the workers. Almost all of it will represent profits and inflation. The greater part of it would not have come into existence but for the war, and is due to the pressure of war conditions. That is why we urge that it is both just and expedient that a substantial levy upon capital should be made, in order to reduce the burdens of the war debt in the country by removing a large part of the war-profit which weak governmental finance failed either to prevent or to commandeer during the process of the war. This fund does not consist wholly of war-profits in the sense of the pro-

duct of high prices for goods. Large sums will have been made out of the very processes of inflation which are putting large book-assets to the account of banks and finance companies in their dealings with the Government. All inflation is bad, but the worst and most costly is where a Government permits and invites private business bodies to manufacture "money" and lend it at very profitable rates to the Government. This is what our Government has done, and the result has been to create large liens upon future wealth based on no real saving and no real wealth.

Such are the considerations which warrant us in holding that the capital values of the country will have been largely increased by the war, and will therefore be in a position to defray a large part of its expense by means of a levy. This is not met, as Mr. Allen seems to think, by pointing to the shrinkage in selling value of trustee securities and other bonds with fixed interest. For what has been the chief cause of this shrinkage? The emergence of large masses of new Government and other securities bearing a higher rate of interest, *i.e.*, the opportunities of this very war-profiteering, the monetary gains of which Mr. Allen and other critics appear to question. It cannot be successfully argued that even during the war the shrinkage of fixed-interest bearing securities outweighs the creation of the new Government securities and the rise in value of many dividend bearing stocks. After the war, with the cessation of new Government loans and the redemption of a great deal of debt, the temporarily shrunk securities will revive, with the result that banks and other firms, which have been concealing their full profits in "war time" by writing down excessively the value of investments and reserves, will realize these hidden profits afterwards in an enlargement of the capital value of their business. We, therefore, maintain that though the material structure of our industries will be smaller than it would have been if the ordinary processes of wealth-production and investment had been going on, the war will leave the moneyed classes of the nation richer than before. By taking a large slice of this extra wealth, due to war conditions and war-finance, the Government can relieve the nation at an early period of a large proportion of the extra burden of taxation which otherwise will exercise a permanently depressing influence upon life and trade. When the propertied classes themselves come closely to envisage their situation in the future, and recognize that in any case the bulk of the cost of the war must be defrayed out of their wealth, they may consent to such a capital levy as we propose in preference to the continuation of high taxation. If they fail to take this view, they will be announcing their intention to shift the large part of their burden on to their poorer fellow-citizens, an intention which they may after all be unable to realize, and which may even be dangerous to profess.

REGULATING THE DRINK TRADE.

It is understood that within a few days—possibly before we go to press—the Government will give the country a much-delayed but definite indication of their policy in regard to the control of the drink traffic. The decision taken has been variously reported, but we believe we are justified in saying that it is both drastic and far-reaching, and that it solves the difficulty in the only logical and satisfactory way. The Government policy, as we understand it, is one of immediate and unfettered control, conjoined with a scheme of deferred purchase.

This solution, as we have throughout insisted, is the only logical and practicable one. Much valuable time has been lost in the consideration of temporary expedients which it was plain could not give the necessary freedom of action. The endeavor, which Lord Milner has lately made, to find a half-way house in a scheme of temporary control which would have concentrated brewing and distribution in a comparatively few hands, has broken down for obvious reasons. It was superficially attractive, but quite impracticable. Sir George Cave's earlier experience in similar negotiations should have warned the Cabinet

in advance of its impracticability. On the face of it, it promised important economies in labor and transport—and these are urgent and vital objects—but it could only have secured these temporary advantages by permanently entrenching the largest and most powerful brewery companies in a position of unassailable strength at the cost of the arbitrary suppression of thousands of smaller breweries, and of a much larger number of retailers. Such a result would have been permanently harmful to the temperance movement, which has been defeated and thrust back again and again in the past by the strength of entrenched interests, and it would have outraged a widespread sentiment of equity. Moreover, it would have raised in an acute form, and for quite temporary purposes, very difficult questions of compensation. If these questions must be raised—and they cannot be avoided by any drastic proposals so far made—let us at least have the good sense to raise them in the interest of permanent objects and only as the price of permanent freedom. It was perhaps natural that a few of the large Burton and London brewers should be attracted by a scheme of temporary control which would concentrate the manufacture and distribution of beer in their own and a few other hands; but even they would seem to have overlooked one important fact which, when realized, threatened the goodwill of their businesses. The output of beer has been restricted to an extent which makes the supply inadequate to meet the present demand. If the output is not to be increased—and of that there can be no question—the gravity and strength of the beer brewed must be reduced. That is one of the cardinal necessities of the situation. But to reduce the gravity and strength of well-known proprietary beers is practically to destroy the goodwill of certain of the largest breweries. This is a consequence of temporary control which it is evident some of the strongest supporters of the temporary policy had not foreseen, and the discovery gave the matter a totally different complexion.

The truth is, much as some people may dislike the idea of State control and purchase, there is no half-way policy which can give the necessary results. Immediate prohibition is impracticable. The Government know that better than anyone else. Their present difficulties are largely the result of going too far already in the restriction of output. At the same time, economies in labor, fuel, and transport are urgently necessary. They cannot be longer delayed. They are possible and easy under State control, and impossible in any other way which public opinion and ordinary prudence will support. If it is possible (as we believe it to be) to close immediately a very large number of unnecessary breweries, and, say, twenty thousand redundant public-houses, then it would be criminal folly not to do it. But it would be even greater folly to do it temporarily, as other proposals have contemplated, when it can be done permanently under a guarantee of State purchase. The Government policy, as it is now disclosed, has the supreme merit of combining permanent freedom of action with immediate advantage. A deferred scheme of purchase, with immediate control, provides an ample opportunity for the mature consideration of a permanent scheme, while clearing the ground for instant action. We wish the decision had been taken sooner. Now that it has been taken, we hope it will be implemented with despatch. The proposed committees have a comparatively simple duty; the terms of reference are apparently to be narrowed to plain and direct issues. We see no reason why the Committees should not be in a position to report in two or, at most, three weeks.

A London Diary.

LONDON, FRIDAY.

WE must all rejoice to read in Mr. Wilson's communication to Russia the evidence that the war-aims of the Allies are being switched off the line of ambition and switched on to the line of world-settlement.

The American imagination sees this accomplished as a great act of democracy, the States pointing the way. There is Mr. Wilson's ambition; there, too, lies his account with his own people. America is to take this live coal off her own burning altar and kindle with it the slumbering fires of German democracy. So may it be! But there is a greater business still implicit in this victory for popular government. That is a victory for concord. One way or another the world must within a measurable period reach a form of peace under which in time it may regain its essential unity. What happens to it if it fails? Well, one thing happens, and that is Famine, with all the changes and disturbances in the form and spirit of human society that want of food must bring with it. This is not a Jeremiad. It is fact. The first two years of the war were favored by good American harvests. The third year is pretty sure to be attended by a poor one. In other words, a world which is eating more, working less, and destroying part of its existing food-stocks, has the wolf at its door. I suppose the probable wheat shortage may be estimated at something like 30 per cent. on a comparison with the last year's harvests, and that we cannot set against it any reserve for the world. Now it is clear that this shortage may be prolonged by the war, or be intensified in this part of the world or that by an improper or a defective distribution of the supply. Therefore it is essential that the governors of this threatened society should take counsel, so that the peril that hangs over its head may at least be minimized, and softened in its incidence on the specially poor nations and the specially poor classes. Shall not this be done? And is any too much time to be lost? I think not.

I AM interested in the Attorney-General's reply to the very unpleasant questions addressed to him about "Alec Gordon." For I gather from them that (a) this man has been in Government employment; but (b) the Attorney-General is "entirely unimpressed" by the sworn evidence of various well-known and leading workmen that "Gordon's" idea of such employment was the idea which he carried out so successfully in the Wheeldon case, that, namely, of inciting to crime; that (c) he has disappeared, but that the Attorney-General has no curiosity as to his whereabouts; and that (d) there has been a secret inquiry department attached to the Ministry of Munitions; but (e) this Ministry within a Ministry has, for unstated reasons, ceased to exist. All one can say about such a statement is that it affirms nearly every point of suspicion that this monstrous incident has created, and dissipates no one of them. I should, for example, expect anyone who had been impressed by "Alec Gordon's" contribution to the Wheeldon case to be totally "unimpressed" by the testimony to his character which I read the other day in a number of conspicuously clear and moderate statements. And I should also expect every honest workman attached to this Government, from Mr. Barnes downwards, to probe this matter to the bottom, and failing satisfactory proof that the Ministry of Munitions was not the betrayer and deceiver of his class, but the betrayed and deceived, to quit his association with it for ever.

THE younger Mr. Redmond's death is not so much a tragedy, for I can imagine no happier nature than his, and no fuller life, as a grave and noble commentary on the war. I suppose no one saw his place in it more clearly than this simple, kind, generous, and extremely unselfish character. It was to bring England and Ireland together in a Home Rule settlement. I am sure he looked to his death as a means; it is impossible to read his last speech without so thinking of it. Yet what a loss to our self-regarding society of men to be without this most sweet and affable member of it. The House in itself, apart from its conventions, always had this idea of Willie Redmond. But at one time it was the fashion to think of him as one of the wicked; and it was only within the Home Rule period that "Willie" began to sun himself in an atmosphere of universal affection. He had several disguises. He was

a great humorist; and one of his humors was to set himself up as a bore. He played the part very well, for his voice was strong and of a monotonous cadence, and if he chose he could talk forever without saying anything at all. He used this gift abundantly, and even as a sort of physical exercise. "I've just been airing my voice," he would say in modest explanation. But when he had serious things to say, he said them, as in his war speeches, with the utmost dignity of bearing and expression.

LORD BERTIE has, of course been a very powerful, very masterful Ambassador, and so far as influence goes, we have no reason for complaining that Britain has spoken to our Ally with an uncertain voice. In that respect the Lyons tradition has been preserved. But it is not necessary to assume, with the "Times," that there is one indispensable man for the French Embassy, and that he is Lord Bertie. Clearly there has not been in the matter of the passports the perfect understanding between the two Governments that was desirable, and M. Ribot's expression of the difference might, one would think, have been different if the means of communication between them had been rather more sympathetic.

I SUPPOSE one must put some measure to the delight of the discovery of a book on a holiday. So I will moderate the rapture which seized and bore me away in company with Mr. W. H. Davies's "Autobiography of a super-Tramp." It was published years ago (1907), so I advertize the shame of my late acquaintance with it. Let me declare it to be the best entertainment in the world, and its author to be of the party of Cervantes, Fielding, Defoe, and a few other priceless caterers of the soul. I am told that only 500 copies have been sold. I mention this disgraceful allegation without substantiating or even believing it. The book has only one fault: there is not enough of it. There should be thousands of pages of it; not a skimpy 300 or so, and if Mr. Davies (who has his own methods of publication) would issue a daily broadsheet of new tramp adventures from his head office at the "Farmhouse" (or in Heaven), I would wait at the door till he had it ready for me. For Mr. Davies's book seems to me to have all the marks of good literature. It has humor without jokes; humanity without sentimentalism; color without fine writing; the power of suggestion without over-statement; the gift of telling a story without seeming to tell it; style without self-consciousness. Above everything, it has the best of subjects. Are not all the best books tramp-books? Is there anything in life so wonderful as setting out on a journey? And is not the tramp's voyage the only one that begins and ends in perfect freedom?

I PROPOSE to reply next week to Mr. Chesterton's good-tempered assault in "The New Witness."

A WAYFARER.

Life and Letters.

THE SOUL OF THE PROFESSIONAL MAN.

How to keep the soul of man alive inside a Profession has always been one of the gravest of the problems of human progress. It is not obvious in the nature of things that this should be the case. For the skilled activities which form the basis of a profession might be supposed to carry such strong inherent interests, and to afford such scope for individual experiment and personal distinction, that every man would put his best ability into his work. The care of a soul, a body, or an estate, is of such critical importance to humanity, that it might be expected that the priest, the teacher, the doctor, and the lawyer, being rid of the grosser material considerations of a trade, would freely respond to the spiritual estimate of such a calling. And yet a worse case can be made against pro-

professionalism than against commercialism. The tradesman or the manufacturer is not supposed to be interested primarily in the quality of the goods which he supplies: he is avowedly out for personal gain. But if his hand is in some sense against his customer, there are two restraints on the abuse of his power. The customer or consumer has some reasonably effective opportunity of testing the utility of what is sold, and in most instances is at liberty to transfer his custom to some other independent and competing firm. These are the conditions which promote efficiency and improvement in the production of ordinary commodities, and afford some protection to the general public against extortionate prices and bad quality. But in purchasing professional services the layman is far more helpless. The advice or assistance that he gets is not a standardized commodity. He cannot test its value at the time when it is provided, or compare it with another independent judgment, or in most instances prove its worth afterwards by any clear canon of cause and effect. Moreover, he is virtually disabled from refusing to follow the professional advice he has invited in matters of most urgent need. This would not, of course, really matter if the actual working of a profession were such as to maintain and promote the highest standard of expert knowledge throughout the body of the profession. If there prevailed a really disinterested love of truth and a passion for devoting the best expert knowledge and skill to promote human welfare, the confidence of laymen in their professional advisers would be justified. Unfortunately, these professional ideals are notoriously falsified in practice.

In a volume called "Professionalism and Originality" (Allen & Unwin), Dr. F. W. Hayward formulates a terrible indictment against the learned professions. His charges of inertia, pretentiousness, exclusiveness, tyranny, and cruelty, are driven home by an interesting selection of illustrations and citations drawn from various reading and experience. Indeed, the formal method of his attack is so uncompromising, and the analysis so scathing, as to produce at times a feeling that is likely to tell against the net influence of the book. Not until he quits the summoning of witnesses and opens the wider underlying charge of the hostility of the professions to live thought, does Dr. Hayward establish firm hold upon the sympathy of his more cautious readers. In most children there are born some seeds of originality, some capacity for getting bright ideas, or for striking out new lines of thought or action. The progress of humanity depends upon the detection, nourishment, and utilization of these serviceable variations which add to the stock of human knowledge and power. But if the minds of children are taken at an early age to be ground to a pale unanimity in some educational mill, and later to be handed over to the desiccated spirituality of ecclesiastical, legal, and journalistic professions, it takes an uncommonly tough sort of originality to survive. The trouble about professionalism arises from the universal tendency of man to play for power. Whenever any group of men get hold of some special sort of knowledge or skill, the utility or prestige attaching to it, especially if it is at once important and mysterious, enables them to establish a control over their fellows realizable in terms of power or of gain. But to do this they must organize a craft or mystery, make it impossible for unqualified practitioners to enter or compete, and arrange to hang together in all matters affecting their professional interest, and not to compete injuriously or to give one another away. The conservation of collective prestige lies at the root of the procedure of all professional conduct, or what doctors regard as "the ethics" of the profession. This conservation of prestige depends, of course, upon the members of the profession maintaining a common face before the lay public. This is inconsistent with such personal competition as goes on in a trade, in which one firm invites comparison between its goods and those of its rivals, or offers to do the business more cheaply. A profession is essentially a conspiracy. In theory it is a conspiracy to co-operate effectively for the performance of a public service; in practice it is a conspiracy against the lay public, to exercise power and to extract gain. This might be a tolerable concession to a

general human weakness if it evoked the best professional skill. But, unfortunately, the solidarity of professionalism plays into the hands of inertia. The profession sets itself solidly against efficiency, reform, the creative exercise of the very faculty with which it is engaged. Dr. Hayward cites a cloud of witnesses to sustain his thesis that "Improvements and ideas mostly come from the laity, and are opposed by the profession itself." The opposition to ideas is natural enough.

"The professional man spends considerable time in mastering his art or 'mystery.' He then passes through many months or years, during which he is perfecting himself in the technique of his profession. It is clear that if a reformer or innovator now appears on the scene and asserts that the professional principles are false or the technique no longer pertinent, he is practically asserting that labor has been thrown away, and that the professional pedestal must be deserted for the level grounds."

Every profession therefore has its heresy-hunts and its Index Expurgatorius, and employs its authority to deter the novice from searching into the fundamentals of the profession. Hence it has been that the orthodoxy of the medical profession has been vehement in denouncing hypnotism, water cures, homeopathy, bone-setting, and so on. It has been said by a leading educational writer that "one of the most extraordinary results of the apathy of professional educationists is that nearly all the genuine improvements in education come from outside." The law, regarded either as a science or a practice, is even more obstinately conservative. "Lawyers," Lord Loreburn has said, "are against legal reform. It is an interested professional opposition, and I feel it my duty to say so."

Dr. Hayward, himself a School Inspector, feels bitterly the shortcomings of educationists.

"As soon as I hear of the National Union of Teachers declaring it an 'unprofessional act' for a teacher consciously to tell lies to children, or to keep salutary truth from them, or of the Board of Education lobbying our legislators because an orchestra does not exist in every town and village, or of our Local Bureaucracies going on strike because Shakespeare is inaccessible, or the Bible atrociously printed, or wall-maps a disgrace to our publishers—as soon as I hear of such things happening, I shall have some hope for education."

The Living Man, instinct with freedom and a passion of getting truth and making it prevail, will not, if he can help it, enter such a prison, will not subject his soul, his creative power, and his sense of social service to the shackles of professional orthodoxy and a selfish *esprit de corps*. But often he cannot help himself, and is drawn in and suffers a sense of conscious degradation of his powers. Mr. Wells draws the picture of such a Living Man, tempted, falling, and escaping, in his *Trafford*, and the modern annals of every Church are full of tragic instances. Dr. Hayward poses the problem with great insight and audacity. But he proposes no solution. Yet a solution must be found. We cannot dispense with the organization of expert knowledge in professions. How can we abate the timidity and selfishness which lead professionals to abuse their trust, and prefer the interest of the profession to that of the public they profess to serve? General appeals to public spirit, the patient waiting for a change of heart, do not meet the urgency of the need. If liberty and creative power are to be conserved and strengthened in such professions as medicine, the law, and education, the grip of professionalism upon the intelligence and sentiment of the individual members must be weakened. They must come to recognize that their livelihood and success depend less upon the opinion and the rules of their profession, and more upon the contribution which they severally make towards public health, justice, and the culture of the community. This is, in part at any rate, a problem of economic status. The extreme precariousness of a professional livelihood saps the independence of mind of many a young professional man, and turns his natural creativeness into a conventional groove. A professional man who is to do fine, free, creative work, either in the science or the art

to which he is attached, should be relieved from the pecuniary strain of a competitive and conventional career. His livelihood and his advancement should not be at the mercy, on the one hand, of meretricious manners in dealing with clients and cases, nor, on the other hand, of the goodwill of the elders and rulers who wield the professional "dead hand." The excessive syndicalism of the professions can best be cured by a large measure of socialization. Can anybody doubt that if the health of a town were entrusted to a panel of well-salaried medical men, with a substantial bonus to the panel for every measurable improvement in the public health, the skilled co-operation of this professional group would evince great resourcefulness in all the arts of hygienic reform, and a wholesome competition of a wholly serviceable sort would take place between one locality and another, in which professional and local pride would be enlisted on the side of progress? How far a similar administration of skilled public service would be applicable to the other professions, we cannot here inquire. But it is evident that the liberation of the individual in a profession from the material tyranny which his Union wields at present, by making him a salaried public servant, would go not a little way towards the intellectual and moral liberation which Mr. Hayward so keenly desires. If it would not of itself ensure the finest play of those disinterested passions for truth and social welfare, which are the driving forces of professional creativeness and progress, it would go far to remove some of the worst obstacles.

A GOSSIP ABOUT SURNAMES.

As a small boy the writer used occasionally to be sent on errands to the shop of a certain Mrs. Catchlove. It was a tiny, dreary little grocer's shop to which recourse was had in cases of emergency. Mrs. Catchlove, behind her counter as she tied up the parcel of tea or sugar, seemed humble but acidulous, cheerful but unhappy; in fact, the very personification of what has since been called "a slave morality." We remember wondering what the name meant. We dimly regarded it as the expression of something propitiatory, the attempt by a servile if somewhat acrid "harmlessness" to capture the goodwill of the tea-buying public, and even of Higher Powers. But alas for the deceitfulness of appearances in words as in everything else! Professor Weekley, in his book on "Surnames" (John Murray), has answered our unspoken childish question of more than forty years ago. "Catchlove" seemed to represent a lower middle-class life, no longer robustious and jolly as in Dickens, but repressed and soured, taking the only revenge possible to it. "The world hunts after wealth," it had the air of saying, "after fame, after pleasure; we will catch love." But the original Catchlove was a hunter, not of love, but of wolves. "Catchlove," says Professor Weekley, "from Chasseloup, means wolf-hunter (Alan Cachleu, Pat. R.)" The name has a Norman ancestry behind it. It does not come from the Catacombs. The untrustworthiness of the look and sound of names was further illustrated by a butcher's shop at the corner of the same street. The owner's patronymic was "Bircher." One shuddered at the name, both as intrinsically hideous and as probably originally held by some official of Bumbledom whose function had been the scourging of pauper children. The writer's father, who was a humanitarian of a somewhat violent type, took a very prejudiced view both of the name and its owner. Professor Weekley corrects this mistake also:—

"The original Bircher was not an educationalist, but a shepherd (Alan le Bercher, Hund. R.) from berger (variants, berchier, berquier). Latinized as bercarius or bercator is one of the commonest entries in cartularies of manorial rolls (Martin Berearius, Cust. Battle Abbey; Richard Bercator Geoffrey le Berkier, Testa de Nev.) It has usually become Barker, as in Piers Plowman:

"Thyne berkeres ben all blynde that bringeth forth thy lambren."

We lay no claim to expert knowledge, but we strongly suspect, by the way, that the pronunciation of Norman-French, and, indeed, of all old French, was on a line with that of English as it is spoken at the present day—that it was not elusive, but what our own populace would call "plain and straightforward." The subtilization of the language seems to have taken place in the middle of the seventeenth century. It was perhaps one of the refinements of the Court of the Roi Soleil. We have sometimes thought we have detected the beginnings of a reverse process taking place in spoken French. What will be the effect on the spoken language of the presence of hundreds of thousands of Englishmen in France at the present time? The "fluid" speech may again become "solid." In the time of Catherine de Medici, for instance, "to roast the goose" would be spoken of as *rostir l'oye*, the words being pronounced much as they would be pronounced if they were English. In the next century "to roast the goose" would be *rôtir l'oie*, pronounced in the modern French fashion. It is possible that in our own time there may be the marked beginning of a reversion to something like sixteenth-century French.

The origins of the descriptive surname, as Professor Weekley shows, are very various. They come from names of places, from peculiarities of personal appearance, from articles of costume, from all sorts of arts and crafts, occupations and callings, from the names of birds and beasts. It is delightful to find, for instance, that there was a "Robert Pussekate" flourishing in Northumberland in the year 1265, three hundred years before "pussy cat" is found in written English. The first bearer of the name may have been the owner of a cat like Dick Whittington's. In the Pipe Rolls (temp. Henry II.) there is mention of a fishmonger named "Henry Graspeys," that is, fat fish, big fish, porpoise. In our own childish days we remember a fisherman known as "old Roach," who used to come to the house with prawns. "Roach" is one of the very few surnames omitted by Professor Weekley from his exhaustive list. There used to be a proverb "sound as a roach," used often in those days, but which we have never heard since in any part of the land. Ford, in his "Handbook to Spain," refers it to St. Roch, so venerated by our medieval ancestors. The meaning would be "sound as a sick man healed by St. Roch." But the surname may come from the fish, some huge specimen of which its first owner may have caught. Still back in Plantagenet times there was a hostess in London named "Agnes Bonet-able." The name speaks well for her, and for the gratitude of the travelling merchants whom she entertained. How pleasant these Norman-French names are! What would one not give to get back through the centuries, and for one day hear Norman-French as a spoken tongue in England! Or for the matter of that Elizabethan English!

Great numbers of names are from trades and occupations. Still going back to our own childish days, there was a "Mr. Isemonger," a portly old gentleman with a distended waistcoat who lived in our street. This, of course, is "iron-monger," a seller of *eisen* or iron. "Iremonger" again is a seller of eggs, the German *Eier*. It is pleasant to think that the seventeenth-century mystic, M. Olier, probably came from a line of prosperous oil-merchants of the Midi. Mysticism and devotion have a background of human life. We do not find "Couss-maker" (the Dutch stocking-maker) in Professor Weekley's list. A well-known family of this name came over with William the Dutchman. Some of the medieval descriptive names have a very hideous significance, for instance, "Escorchevielle." So Macaulay speaks of a West-country executioner after Sedgmoor receiving from the people "the horrible name of Tom Boil-man." But surnames had in his day become stereotyped, and the name did not cleave to his descendants. Names that have resounded through the world are sometimes found unexpectedly in humble places. There died some years ago, amid very poor surroundings, a Plantagenet, the last to bear the name. We were once startled by seeing above a cobbler's shop in a Picardy village the royal legend, "Charlemagne." There was little in the aspect of its occupant to suggest the great Emperor *à la barbe*

fleurie. As in the case of Alexander, Caesar, and the like, the name may have been first given to someone who sustained the rôle in some medieval pageant or play. So we can imagine the name "Christus" sticking to the actor of the principal part in the Ober-Ammergau drama. Many names came from characters represented in the mystery and morality plays. The "Bircher" of sinister suggestion already mentioned, may have been at first a shepherd of the Nativity. There was a common expression in old France used of an arrogant, vainglorious boaster, "C'est un Olibrius." This was from Olibrius, the vaunting persecutor of St. Margaret in the miracle plays. How delightful it would be to come across "Olibrius" emblazoned on a shop front of some little town of provincial France! Coming down to more modern days there are many names, once borne by considerable people, which are extinct, or well on their way to become so. We had never met or heard of anyone bearing the name of "Laud," for instance, till we lately came across the name over a shop in a slum of an East Coast town. Wherever we travel, indeed, it is our practice to notice the names over the shops. They afford much food for reflection. Thus we recently came upon the name "Mayde." About this name there is a point of curious interest. "Maiden was used in Middle English," we are told, "for the unmarried of both sexes." "May" was a young man or a maiden. A "John le Maide" made his will in London in 1279. St. John the Evangelist might well be spoken of as "St. John the Maid."

Oath-names form an interesting class of surnames of which a few remain at the present day—for example, Pardoe, Dando (*dent-Dieu*). People in the Middle Ages again were often nicknamed from some favorite phrase or expression which they continually used. We read of Peter Ouy and David Paraventure. An old acquaintance of our own, if his lot had been cast in medieval days, would certainly have been named "Master Altogether." It seems, by the way, that the phrase "Al die werlt!" was used in medieval German as an exclamation of wonder and joy. It gives the present-day German surname "Allewelt." That this phrase should have been used as a sort of religious exclamation is very curious; it seems to indicate an underlying pantheism, an unconscious belief in the eternity of the world, an unacknowledged sense of its being all-embracing and satisfying.

But such speculations are far-fetched. We like better to think of the old life of the people of Europe, the people of England, the people of Dickens, the people of Shakespeare, the people of the miracle plays, all the taverners and falconers and millers, and the rest, the innumerable people, all the Normans and Saxons of England, whose lives and thoughts are all about us still.

Short Studies.

THE IRONY OF BATTLE.

IRONY is difficult to define, for it has many kinds and many depths; it may be light, evil and bitter, artificial and profound; it is sometimes noble in persons, as in the three or four recorded words of Dante; and it is always strange and suggestive in circumstance. In the ironical suggestion of circumstances, if ever, men catch a hint of some working behind Life upon the surface of Life; one sees glimpses of a game being played, and wonders, for a moment, if all be accidental, the working of our own wills.

The stories of wars (which often centre about the persons of great ideas) are full of ironical circumstance, most of them, no doubt, the inventions of the poets, but some of them true. The tale that, before his defeat, Mark Antony heard in the air the music of troops passing from him, and knew that his god, Hercules, was giving him over, is probably poetical, like Pompey's dream before Pharsalia. But it is true, and strange, that Cromwell died, knowing that his effort had failed, on the anniversary of the day which made it for the time successful. After the battle of Sedan,

Napoleon the Third surrendered to the enemy in a room hung with prints of the successes of the great Napoleon. It may be that in this present war, the end will come with some strangeness and mockery of circumstance humbling to the proud.

Probably everyone who has seen the fields of this present war has seen cases and instances of irony. Not far from one of the most famous battlefields of this war, there is a military cemetery, containing some two thousand dead. Just beside it is a village Calvary with the inscription:—

"C'EST AINSI QUE DIEU A AIMÉ LE MONDE."

On another battlefield, in a field fortress, stubbornly defended by the enemy and at last won by the English, there is the crater of a mine, sprung by the English under a strong part of the defence. When the fortress was at last won, this crater was found to be littered with enemy dead. One of them was found lying on his face gripping a handful of papers. The papers were little tracts or leaflets sent round (apparently) for distribution to the men, and perhaps this man had been killed in the act of distributing them. The leaflets each bore a rough woodcut, representing a sinking steamer, with a naval cutter rowing towards her. The title underneath the woodcut was:—

"THE U BOAT'S REWARD."

Close to this crater, in another part of the same fortress, where the fighting was close and desperate for several days together, the bodies of two men were found clutching each other as though wrestling. They had evidently grappled each other without weapons of any kind, and had then been killed by a shell or bomb. One of these men was a Bavarian, the other a man of some Scottish regiment. The Scotsman's field service Bible had fallen from his pocket and lay open on the ground at a little distance from him. It was open at the 22nd Chapter of Deuteronomy, under the page headings "Humanity towards Brethren," and "An uncertain Murder."

A more significant and more touching instance of the same thing may be seen in a distant part of the old battlefield of the Somme, in a part of the field where the attack of the English was a containing attack, not meant to do more than to hold the enemy while he was attacked and defeated in the main battle some miles away. Here, where the bombardment was not so terrible as in other parts of that awful moorland of battle, the spring has already begun to cover the desolation, the birds are singing and the grass pushing. The story of the battle is written plainly on the earth for anyone to read. There is the English line, just as the English held it when the battle began. In front of it is the greenish strip of No-Man's Land, with the English wire intact, save for lanes left in it for the passage of the troops in the charge. Two hundred yards down the slope is the dark, rusty tangle of the enemy wire, cut into rags and flung into heaps by the English shrapnel, which plied it for the whole of one terrible week, in the storm of fire which made the enemy speak of the Somme battle as the Blood Bath. All the way, from the English trench to the enemy wire, the English graves are heaped on the ground, just where the men fell in the minute of their leaving their trench. It is possible that they knew, as they went over the parapet, that their charge was but a secondary affair in the tactical scheme, and would not be decisive and glorious in the day's history, so that the graves of these men are deeply pathetic. The marks of the graves stand up all the way to the enemy, almost like the men charging. Some are marked with crosses, others with rifles thrust into the ground by their bayonets, others with standing shells, or with strips of packing-case or bits of equipment. These last are nearly always the graves of the unknown or unrecognizable.

Near one of these graves of the unknown a field prayer-book lies open in the mud at the Psalms appointed for the seventeenth day of the month. The mud and the rain have obliterated nearly all the print upon the page, but for one verse, which says, "Thou hast broken his hedge, thou hast torn down his strong places." The enemy's hedge is indeed broken there, and his strong place is now many miles away; so far that the guns cannot be heard from where this dead man lies.

JOHN MASEFIELD.

Letters to the Editor.

STATE PURCHASE v. PROHIBITION.

SIR,—I have read twice through Mr. McLaren's and Mr. Proudfoot's letters: I cannot see that they touch the arguments for State purchase. I was not arguing about waste of food material, wisely or otherwise. The Treasury has, of course, often opposed loss of revenue, and always will do so; but whenever the nation demands action, the Treasury has had to submit, and will have to submit again.

I should not dream of "assuming" that *everyone* will oppose prohibition: I am content with saying that, whatever Scotland has done, England is not likely to accept it; and it seems to me little short of blindness to go on sacrificing to the hope of prohibition the chances of reform through national control.

The Local Option Bill was really killed by the Election that followed the Bill of Sir William Harcourt—killed in advance, so to speak: the Government of 1908 never made it a winning plank in their programme afterwards. It was the question of the House of Lords that they rested on; and the loss of the Licensing Bill (not merely of Local Option) secured most of the temperance vote. But I never objected, nor do I object, to a Local Option clause attached to a Nationalization Bill: I only doubt its success in England in areas where it is most wanted. The further "assumption" I am supposed by Mr. Proudfoot to have made, as to purchase *implying* "something approaching prohibition," I don't understand: the charge requires clearer definition of terms.

Mr. Proudfoot concludes by claiming that purchase will "multiply private interests." I invite him to state in *detail* the private interests he has here in mind. I would ask your leave to suggest to the Government that, now the cards are on the table, they no longer wait for the combined, interested, and extreme alliance that will, not for the first time, strive to thwart a wise policy at the coming election.—Yours, &c.,

T. C. FRY.

The Deanery, Lincoln. June 12th, 1917.

A WAR LEVY UPON CAPITAL.

SIR,—Your suggestion that a moiety of the War Debt shall be paid by "A Levy upon Capital," in order to show that "wealth" is willing to be "conscripted," may, at first sight, seem both just and practicable, but I venture to think that it would not only prove most inequitable in its incidence, but also that it would accentuate the evil which it is intended to avert.

In the first place, it may be pointed out that inasmuch as the existing "income" tax is levied upon *all* incomes above a certain limit, whether derived from personal effort in a particular year or from "capital" which really represents the accumulated result of such efforts in past years, it is the readiest means available for "conscripting wealth." And if only it were levied upon each individual at a rate determined not only by his total income, but also by the number of persons dependent upon it, it would be by far the most equitable tax that can be devised. For any taxation which is based either upon assumed realizable "capital" values at a given time, or upon the new annual credits (incomes) which their employment actually creates, is really a "conscripting of wealth," using "wealth" as meaning "all useful and agreeable things which possess exchange values."

Your advocacy of a "levy upon capital" amounts, therefore, to no more than a predilection for a particular way of taxing certain forms of wealth, namely, the accumulation of credits created in past years which were not in those years used by those whose efforts created them, or who were otherwise entitled by law to appropriate them. This would certainly operate most unjustly and harmfully, as the following example will show:—

Suppose each of two persons, A and B, to have been for a period of ten years before the war in receipt of an earned income of, say, £1,000 per annum, upon which each had paid exactly the same tax (for the sake of argument say 5 per cent.) to the State, leaving each with a net income of £950 per annum.

Suppose, further, that A, being a self-indulgent and thriftless man, spent the whole of his income as he went along, whereas B, being more prudent, spent only £700 per annum; so that at the end of the ten years, whereas A, having used up all the credits created by his labor, has accumulated no "capital," B stands possessed of an accumulation of unused credits amounting to £2,500 *plus* (if he had wisely "compounded" them) a further sum of, say, £500, or, say £3,000 in all. Now, if the State, in order to extinguish a War Debt, imposes a *tithe* upon "capital" (as you suggest) it would take away from B, at the end of the ten years, and in addition to the £500 which it has already taken from him during that period, a further sum of £300, just because he had stored up unused credits amounting to £3,000, and for no other reason, whilst

from A it would take nothing more, just because he had been thriftless. In other words, a "Levy upon Capital" would not only penalize B for his thrift, but it would do so in order to lighten in future the burden of taxation upon the thriftless A. Such a procedure would in the long run prove as ruinous to the State as it would be unjust to individuals.

Your article advocates a levy upon capital on the supposed ground that there has been an immense accretion of capital during the war owing to "profiteering." It is, of course, true that some persons have been permitted to amass large fortunes out of the miseries of their fellows, notwithstanding a belated and largely ineffective attempt to impose "excess profits" taxes. And if these illegitimate profits could all be tracked down and after the war wholly appropriated by the State, no honest man could object. But, on the other hand, owing to the State's unprecedented borrowings, there has been an immense shrinkage in old capital values generally, and a very large number of persons whose "capital" was, before the war, locked up in so-called "gilt-edged" securities, have had to face losses in their realizable values of anything between 20 and 30 per cent. on the average. And to impose a direct levy of 10 per cent. (as is suggested) upon such depreciated values, because, forsooth, other people have "profited" by the war, would surely be a cruel and indefensible proceeding, which would inflict quite unnecessary hardship upon tens of thousands of innocent people.

Another practical objection to a "Levy upon Capital" is that "capital values" are much less easily and accurately ascertained than are "incomes." Any "capital levy" to be at all equitable must include *all* forms of accumulated wealth, such as land, minerals, buildings, furniture, works of art, machinery, and productive appliances of all kinds whatsoever, whether owned by private individuals, or by municipalities, or by joint stock companies, and it would necessarily affect all existing insurance contracts and pension schemes which depend upon accumulated and invested funds. And even if such a complete valuation of property of all kinds could be equitably carried out within a measurable period of years, both prudence and justice would demand that such a colossal operation should be postponed for a sufficient period of years to allow of capital values becoming relatively re-established after the acute dislocations produced by restriction of markets during the war.

That taxation during the next generation will inevitably be high, and ought mainly to be borne by those who are best able to bear it, namely, those whose annual credits ("incomes") are relatively high, are self-evident propositions. Also, it is fair that the returns from forms of tangible capital which are independent of a man's health or of his ability to work should be taxed at a higher rate than returns which are affected by such circumstances. And the "death duties" imposed upon realizable capital values, when they are passed on from one generation to another, are perfectly justifiable, and they might be materially increased without detriment, especially in cases of large estates and where capital passes by death to the original owner's more distant kindred.

As a preliminary to a much-needed reform in taxation, let the Government appoint a strong Commission to investigate the incidence of taxation, and to suggest reforms on the principle of levies upon "incomes," graduated both horizontally and vertically, with a higher scale for incomes derived from "invested capital," except those below a certain limit accruing to persons above (say) 65 years of age or to widows with children. And, if it so please you, let such graduation be so steepened as the scale of income is ascended that all very large incomes shall be extinguished. Let "death duties" be retained, but on higher scales, and graduated so as to prevent all very large transferences of capital by inheritance. Put a special tax upon all increments in land values and all new mineral royalties, way-leaves, and the like. And, finally, let all classes of earners be subject alike to the same principle of assessment; the present comparative immunity of farmers as a class from income tax is a public scandal, and the leniency with which the landed classes generally have hitherto been treated ought no longer to be permitted.—Yours, &c.,

WILLIAM A. BONE.

June 12th, 1917.

SIR,—Will you allow me to give a few simple facts—of general application—in support of the two letters of protest which you publish this week against the amazing statements and proposals contained in the article "A War Levy on Capital"?

After forty-six years of a working life, I have the control of a moderate capital. Since the outbreak of the war, this capital has decreased on an average by 23 per cent., with a loss of income of about one-third. Upon this reduced income I have to pay double the amount of pre-war taxes. By the strictest personal and household economy, annual expenditure has been reduced by nearly one-third—all invested in War Loans and War Funds. I have also sold nearly one-fourth of the original capital of 1914, at a substantial loss, for the pur-

pose of further investment in War Loans. Although I am too old for active participation in the war, my family and relations have contributed eleven names to the Roll of Honor, and nearly forty members are still in the Army. This has to be, most unfortunately, a personal statement; but I am only one among the many thousands of the "propertied classes" who have the same tale to tell, and I shall be glad to learn, in the further article that you promise, where my "war loot" comes in, and how you propose to tax it.—Yours, &c.,

H.

June 9th, 1917.

PROPORTIONAL REPRESENTATION: THE BY-ELECTION DIFFICULTY.

SIR,—In the debate upon Proportional Representation, it has been suggested that what is called the "by-election difficulty" might be met by dividing the constituency up into wards. Let me call attention to a danger in this proposal which has probably escaped notice, and which, in spite of yesterday's division, it may be well to keep in mind.

When the Ballot Bill was before the House of Commons, more years ago than I care to remember, it was pointed out to a member, who was greatly interested in the measure, that whilst under the Bill, as drafted, *individual bribery and coercion* would be made difficult, *collective bribery and coercion* might take its place. To illustrate: The agent of an intolerant landlord might say to the electors in a village, "I shall not be able to know how each of you has voted, but I will take care to ascertain how the village as a whole has voted. Most of the voters in the village will be my tenants, and if the vote is against my man, you must look out for trouble." Or the attempt to influence might take the opposite form of bribes if the collective vote were in favor of the landlord's man. The point was at once recognized, and, to close the loophole, it was provided that "before the Returning Officer proceeds to count the votes, he shall . . . mix together the whole of the ballot papers contained in the ballot boxes." (See No. 34 of the Rules in the Schedule of the Act.)

An argument used on behalf of the Representation of the People Bill is that constituencies would be so large as to make bribery and coercion almost impossible. This very important point may be lost if at a by-election the constituency were greatly reduced in numbers. It is claimed for such elections that they are of value as indicating the hold which the Government of the day retains upon public opinion. For this purpose, a by-election won by corrupt means would be worthless and might be absolutely misleading.—Yours, &c.,

J. R.

York. June 13th, 1917.

ALSACE-LORRAINE.

SIR,—One is very glad to see in your last issue so definite an expression of "deep sympathy" with France's recovery of Alsace-Lorraine. Just as the annexation of Alsace-Lorraine was one of the chief causes of the present world-conflict, so, as you say, the war cannot end in a tolerable or durable peace without a final settlement of this vexed question. But when you speak of securing, or even extorting, "the assent of Germany to a free vote," you are, one greatly fears, crying for the moon.

There is hardly any condition to which the present rulers of Germany would not agree rather than the retrocession of the annexed provinces—and to restore them by the vote of those whom they have alternately cajoled and threatened for nearly fifty years would surely be too bitter a pill to swallow! It was only last week that the "Frankfurter Zeitung" and other papers declared that the provinces could only be taken away from a beaten Germany. And who can but contemplate with horror what may happen before that "taking away" comes about? Already, according to information received by Abbé Wetterlé, the Germans are removing all the collections from the museums and libraries, and carrying away factory plant and archives.

You remark that Bismarck failed to consult the Alsations themselves as to their political destiny. *There was no need*, for the opinions of the people had already been clearly and definitely expressed by the unanimous declaration of their representatives at the Bordeaux Assembly. Everything that has happened since in these unhappy territories has but deepened, on the one hand, detestation of the conqueror, and, on the other, attachment to the country from whence they were torn against their expressed will.

No, so far from allowing "a free vote," the tendency in Germany is to adopt the policy of Rehoboth. Professor Laband, of Strasbourg, has just been discussing the future of the provinces, and what are the possibilities he considers? (1) Incorporation in Prussia; (2) partition amongst Prussia, Bavaria, and Baden; (3) giving the provinces the status of a Federal State of the Empire. In turn, all are rejected (one of the grounds for the rejection of the last-named being the damning confession that "*The people could not be trusted*"), and Pro-

fessor Laband's panacea is that the old hateful system must be "maintained and accentuated."

This "accentuation," it may be pointed out, is already in operation (see "A Wayfarer's" note on page 241), for, according to Herr Wendel, a member of the Reichstag:—

"The military authorities who, since July, 1914, have exercised unlimited sway in Alsace-Lorraine, have, apart from their military duties, carried on since that time a policy of Germanization on the Pan-German model and by Pan-German means. They have succeeded in creating the fear that the sole result in the end will be a complete and lasting alienation of the people of the provinces from Germany."

You speak of Germany, in turn, nursing her "revenge." But the *revanche* in France has stood not so much for revenge as for reparation and restoration. Alsace-Lorraine has had two elements in her cup of bitterness, the one the Prussian despotism of the invader, and the other the apparent indifference of France to her fate. Now that war has come through the fault, not of Alsace-Lorraine nor of France, but of a super-militarist Prussianism, who shall any longer forbid the banners between two parties who ought never to have been separated, and who so obviously desire to be reunited?—Yours, &c.,

HENRY J. COWELL.

49, Nelson Road, Stroud Green, N. 8. June 11th, 1917.

SIR,—Your paragraphs on page 234 regarding the proposal to settle the future of Alsace-Lorraine by *plébiscite* are disposed of pretty well by Mr. Cowell's letter on page 247. I gathered from M. Helmer that his idea of a *plébiscite* was a vote of the inhabitants of Alsace-Lorraine who were resident there before 1871, and their direct descendants wherever now resident. It is hardly credible that a fair-minded international tribunal would consider equitable a vote which excluded all the immigrants. It was because of the danger of such a vote that some of the original members of the U.D.C. got Article (1) of its policy—"No province shall be transferred from one Government to another without the consent by *plébiscite* of the population of such province," altered by adding "or otherwise" after "*plébiscite*."

Most people who know the country believe that all that is left of the original inhabitants, and their descendants, desire reunion with France, and this would be no doubt *constaté* by any Commission appointed by the Peace Congress.—Yours, &c.,

D. M. STEVENSON.

Glasgow. June 11th, 1917.

"A NEW PARTY OF THE PEOPLE."

SIR,—I gather from your article on the meeting at Leeds that a new Labor movement is in the making, and that Guild Socialism is to be its leading feature.

Can you tell me where I can find a definite and authoritative statement of what Guild Socialism is, and whether the refusal of the "Guild" of Seamen to allow some of the Leeds speakers to embark on the ships they man is a piece of Guild Socialism?—Yours, &c.,

STEWART D. HEADLAM.

Wavertree, St. Margaret's-on-Thames. June 10th, 1917.

Poetry.

ON SUDDENLY WAKING.

I THOUGHT a hundred birds flew by,
All going to the ground,
The stone-grey pigeon and the tit
Came down without a sound:
For every naked tree I heard
Throw down its feathers like a bird!

The climbing sun in heaven grew bold
Behind the winter wood,
And each old bird that would not sing
Awoke and cried it could!
While from the shadows on the lawn
A fine cock pheasant watched the dawn.

The fine cock pheasant watched with me,
His eyes and mine were proud.
He called out in a rusty key,
And I called just as loud;
I saw his amber pupils shine,
And he could see the blue in mine!

ENID BAGNOLD.

"THE NATION" ESSAY COMPETITION

JUDGES:

PROFESSOR A. J. GRANT, M.A., PROFESSOR L. T. HOBHOUSE, D.Litt.,
and THE EDITOR OF "THE NATION."

*The Judges have Awarded the following Prizes in Division III,
open to working men and women.*

103 ESSAYS WERE SUBMITTED IN THIS DIVISION.

1st Prize		25 Guineas
A. H. FORREST	7, Alverbank Gardens, Merchiston, Edinburgh.	
5 Prizes of		5 Guineas each
WILLIAM BENNETT	11, Packett Street, Fenton, Stoke-on-Trent.	
H. G. LYALL	2, High Shane, Macduff.	
J. P. PORTER	Upton Road, Watford.	
F. B. SIMPSON	58, Beechwood Terrace, Burley, Leeds.	
BEN WILSON	6, Cliff Villas, Bradford.	
25 Prizes of		2 Guineas each
MISS N. E. ADAMS	2, Payne's Cottages, Cobden Street, Kettering, Northants.	
WALTER ALSTON	68, Brandon Street, Motherwell, N.B.	
WILLIAM E. ANDREWS	22, Garrick Street, Nelson, Lanes.	
A. W. BALLARD	30, Deanery Road, Stratford, E.15.	
W. J. BLACKMUR	96, Little Ilford Lane, Manor Park, E.12.	
A. BLACKWOOD	Station House, Alva, Stirling.	
HENRY BOLTON	31, Clyde Street, Chopwell, Co. Durham.	
J. BROOKSBANK	Wellands Cottage, Moorbottom, Cleckheaton, Yorks.	
T. K. BROWN	3, Whitehead Street, Dukinfield, Cheshire.	
M. BURKE	19, Joseph Street, Sutton, St. Helens, Lanes.	
CLR.-SGT. H. CALVEY	B.E.F., France.	
W. A. DICKINS	45, Salisbury Mansions, St. Ann's Road, Harringay Park, N.22.	
T. C. FOLEY	10, Walmer Street, Hereford.	
W. GARNER	47, Hatherley Gardens, East Ham, E. 6.	
H. H. GOODYEAR	17, St. James's Road, Marsh, Huddersfield.	
WILLIAM HARGREAVES	5, Mercer Street, Levenshulme, near Manchester.	
W. K. HEMINGWAY	19, Brandling Street, Hunslet, Leeds.	
J. EDWARD JOHNSON	Elm Bank, Malvern.	
R. C. KELLAWAY	14, Sunningdale, Alma Road, Clifton, Bristol.	
ROBERT LANGLEY	233, Lynton Road, Bermondsey, S.E.1.	
C. W. PEACHEY	25, Manor Street, Falkirk.	
E. SMITH	26, Middlesex Road, Bootle, near Liverpool.	
F. SMITH	47, Kathleen Road, Battersea, S.W.11.	
FRANK B. SMITH	35, Alverstone Road, Egremont, Cheshire.	
A. E. YARRINGTON	95, Main Street, Sparkbrook, Birmingham.	
A Special Prize of		5 Guineas has been awarded to
MISS K. M. WRIGHT	3, Norbury Crescent, Norbury, S.W.16.	

The names of Prize Winners in Divisions I. and II. will be announced shortly.

The World of Books.

THE "NATION" OFFICE, THURSDAY NIGHT.

THE following is our weekly selection of books which we commend to the notice of our readers:—

- "Posthumous Poems." By Algernon Charles Swinburne. (Heinemann. 6s. net.)
 "With Botha and Smuts in Africa." By W. Whittall. (Cassell. 6s. net.)
 "L. of C. (Lines of Communication)." By Captain J. E. Agate. (Constable. 6s. net.)
 "Short Rations: An American Woman in Germany." By Madeleine Z. Doty. (Methuen. 5s. net.)
 "Italy at War." By Herbert Vivian. (Dent. 6s. net.)
 "The Survival of Jesus." By J. H. Skrine. (Constable. 5s. net.)
 "The Locust." By Joan Sutherland. (Mills & Boon. 6s.)
 "Les Leçons Intellectuelles de la Guerre." Par René Lote. (Paris: Perin, 3 fr. 50.)

A CORRESPONDENT who seems to share my own liking for books a little off the beaten track, especially if they are seasoned with gossip, tells me that he has enjoyed Lady Louisa Stuart's "Letters," which I recommended some time ago in these columns. Now, following the precedent of Oliver Twist, he asks for more. It is a rather embarrassing request, but possibly a book which I have been dipping into at odd intervals for a couple of weeks past might meet his case. This is the "Memoirs, Journals and Correspondence of Thomas Moore," edited by Lord John Russell. It is not an uncommon book in the second-hand shops, but I find that not very many people have read it. And whatever be its faults, it is certainly gossip and entertaining. As an assemblage of notes and observations upon the intellectual society of Moore's time, its value, wrote the late Dr. Garnett, is very considerable. "If it does not portray personages, it reproduces the general atmosphere. We feel as if we were living in the period, and well content to do so. It is a most entertaining book, full of anecdotes and *bon mots*, which have lost nothing of their freshness, and it has a general air of politeness and urbanity." These qualities give it a place among what Horace Walpole called "lounging books," and it seems to be the sort of lounging book of which my correspondent is in search.

MOORE has had to pay by an undue depreciation since his death for the unbounded enthusiasm which he roused while he was alive. "When I was young," said the worldly-wise Lord Palmerston, "everybody was religious; now when I am old, nobody is religious—two great mistakes." It would be hard to say which mistake is the greater—the vogue that Moore enjoyed when Lalla Rookh was young, or his present neglect. English readers of 1817 were as familiar with the landscape by Bendemeer's stream and the Lake of Cashmere as they were with Richmond and the Thames. That "luxurious quarto" was to be found in every drawing-room, and if moralists censored it as "voluptuous," why, that gave its reading only a greater zest. But if Moore was not one of the greatest poets and wits who have adorned our literature, there is respectable authority for claiming that, both as poet and wit, he deserves at any rate a passing attention. Coleridge admitted that Moore had written more beautiful lyrics than any poet who had ever lived. Byron thought him the only poet whose conversation equalled his writings. "I never received a visit from him," said Leigh Hunt, "but I felt as if I had been talking with Prior or Sir Charles Sedley." Sydney Smith wrote to him: "By the beard of the prelate of Canterbury, by the cassock of the prelate of York, by the breakfasts of Rogers, by Luttrell's love of side dishes, I swear that I had rather hear you sing than any other person I ever heard in my life, male or female. For what is your singing but beautiful poetry, floating in fine music, and guided by exquisite feeling?" And Scott thought him a scholar who looked like a school-boy, "not the least touch of the poet or the pedant . . . he also enjoys the *mot pour rire*, and so do I."

In one class of his writings, Moore started a tradition which I regret has been allowed to lapse. He has been

dubbed the "laureate of Liberalism," and his political satire in verse was light, witty, pungent, and epigrammatic. Political satire in verse has almost become a lost art. We have, it is true, Mr. Squire; but what is even he against so many? In Mr. Belloc's hands the novel has become a weapon of political offence; but, for the most part, political controversy is confined to the leading articles, and in them far too often the invective is "unfinished." This lack is a sad diminution of the world's gaiety, and a poet who could produce modern versions of "The Twopenny Post Bag," or "Fables for the Holy Alliance," would find readers whom Vorticist and Imagist leave unperturbed. Political satire of the sort Moore wrote went out about the same time as duelling, another practice to which the poet gave some countenance. He challenged Jeffrey and he challenged Byron, though on both occasions he agreed with his adversaries while he was in the way with them, and, without any loss of their respect or of his own, made friends of both men for life. I wish, by the way, that I had enough knowledge to write an essay on literary duels. Paul Déroulède seems to have spent his life giving or receiving challenges, and there is the duel between Emile de Girardin and Armand Carrel, which cost the latter his life. A less familiar fact is that Sainte-Beuve once defended his critical opinions at the point of the pistol. It was a drizzling day, and the famous critic faced his adversary beneath an open umbrella, observing that though he might be killed by a bullet, he was determined not to catch his death of a cold.

COMING back to Moore's "Memoirs," there are two methods of reading them. One is to read them—in the eight volumes which Lord John Russell edited. Another is to acquire the "Thomas Moore Anecdotes," edited by Mr. Wilmot Harrison, and published by Messrs. Jarrold in 1899. Mr. Harrison, imitating Jack Horner, has pulled the plums out of the "Memoirs," and his book has the further advantage of an Introduction from the pen of Dr. Richard Garnett. As against the former method, we have Dr. Garnett's verdict that "the original edition of the 'Memoirs, Journals, and Correspondence' is a monumental example of slovenly editing. It is a great testimony to the intrinsic merits of Moore's work that it should nevertheless have established itself as one of the most generally appreciated English examples of the invaluable class of literature to which it belongs." Lord John Russell's great fault as an editor was that he did very little to retrieve a great many letters of Moore's which might have added to the interest of the book. Not that Moore takes high rank among our letter-writers. He writes simply and naturally, but he has little graphic force. As Dr. Garnett puts it: "In this department of literature he is mediocre, neither bad nor good, but nearer to good than bad." For those who enjoy letters this is invitation enough, and while we lament that Lord John Russell was remiss as an editor, we thank him for what he has preserved, and think ourselves lucky that, at any rate, we are eight volumes to the good.

MOORE's "Memoirs" are a mine of anecdotes and witticisms. Had it not been for Moore, some of the best efforts of such noted wits as Sydney Smith, Rogers—of whom Moore says that he found him one morning in "a fine vein of causticity"—Luttrell, Sheridan, and Talleyrand, might have been lost in oblivion. Two anecdotes in the book, though tinged with the chestnut flavor, have sometimes been used as a test for a sense of humor. One is that of a man who, as he left a club where he had lost heavily at play, saw a stranger tying his shoe at the top of the steps that led up to it. He promptly kicked the stranger down the steps, with the explanation:—"D—n you, sir, you're always tying your shoe!" The other is related by Moore on the authority of the Dutch Minister:—

"Dodel told of the wife of some ambassador (I forget her name) coming to dinner, and on her passing through the ante-room where Talleyrand was standing, he looked up and exclaimed significantly: 'Ah!' In the course of the dinner, the lady having asked him across the table why he had uttered the exclamation of 'Oh!' on her entrance, Talleyrand, with a grave self-vindictory look, answered:—

"'Madame, je n'ai pas dit 'oh!' j'ai dit 'ah!''"

"Comical, very," is Moore's comment, "without one's being able to define why it is so."

PENGUIN.

Reviews.

MORE SWINBURNE.

"Posthumous Poems." By ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE.
 Edited by EDMUND GOSSE and THOMAS J. WISE.
 (Heinemann. 6s. net.)

EVEN now we have not the whole of Swinburne's verse. "There is a section of Swinburne's lyrical writings," says Mr. Gosse, "which has often been talked of, but will not at present escape our guardianship:—

"Once, in the 'sixties, Jowett drove the poet home from a dinner, and someone asking the Master afterwards how Swinburne had behaved, Jowett answered, with an indulgent smile, 'Oh, he sang all the way—bad songs—very bad songs.' The world is growing less and less censorious, and more and more willing to be amused. Perhaps a future editor, perhaps even ourselves, may one day venture in this direction, but not yet."

Apart from these Rabelaisian raptures—which Mr. Gosse ought to have had the courage to publish now, if they are worth publishing at any time—we have in the present volume the best treasure of verse that is likely to be found in Swinburne's rubbish heaps. We say "rubbish heaps" not contemptuously but descriptively. Swinburne seems to have tossed his unpublished poems casually among "proofs, bills, letters, prospectuses, and every species of rubbish," and to have periodically swept his table clear of everything it contained, which he then tied up in a newspaper and laid on a shelf in his sitting-room. After his death, Mr. Gosse tells us, his room was found to contain a great number of these "unsightly rolls or parcels tied up in old newspapers, some of them looking as if they had not been opened for half a century." Eagerly as Mr. Wegg and Mr. Venus prying among the mounds of rubbish in Boffin's Bower, though with nobler intent than they, Mr. Gosse and Mr. Wise have examined these packages of Swinburne odds and ends. The present volume is made up of their discoveries and of certain poems sold to Mr. Wise in manuscript by Watts-Dunton.

"Posthumous Poems" will be pounced upon with delight by the Swinburne enthusiast. It will have only a moderate appeal, however, for the lover of poetry. The book contains practically nothing that one would wish to see in a selection of Swinburne's verse. The only poem in it which rises to the grand level is one entitled "Recollections," which "was addressed to W. B. Scott, and was intended as the Dedication to 'Poems and Ballads: Second Series,' 1878, but was held back when Swinburne recollected his promise to dedicate that volume to Richard Burton." Swinburne was the poet of boyish ecstasy rather than of the divine vision, and the music of boyish ecstasy sweeps through these lines in which he recalls the years:—

"When, ever in August holiday times,
 I rode or swam through a rapture of rhymes,
 Over heath and crag, and by sea and by stream,
 Clothed with delight by the might of a dream,
 With the sweet sharp wind blown hard through my hair,
 Or eyes enkindled and head made bare,
 Reining my rhymes into royal order
 Through honied leagues of the northland border;
 Or loosened a song to seal from me
 A kiss on the clamorous mouth of the sea.
 So swarmed and sprang, as a covey they start,
 The song-birds hatched of a hot glad heart,
 With notes too shrill and a windy joy
 Fluttering and firing the heart of a boy,
 With far keen echoes of painless pain
 Beating their wings on his heart and his brain,
 Till a life's whole search, were it brief, were it long,
 Seemed but a field to be sown with song."

Even here one is reminded of Swinburne's taste for sounding images that pass into the ludicrous, as in the line:

"A kiss on the clamorous mouth of the sea."

One understands the ecstasy which goes to the making of such an image, but a finer artist would have discarded it as mouthing.

There is the same vice of exaggeration in the sonnet to a beautiful woman, which contains the lines:—

"Locks close as weed in river-water cool,
 A purer throat and softer than white wool,
 Eyes where sleep always seems about to wake.
 No dead man's flesh but feels the strong sweet ache,
 And that sharp amorous watch the years annul,
 If his grave's grass have felt you anywhere."

Apart from the line:—

"Eyes where sleep always seems about to wake,"

there is nothing here but inappropriate image and hyperbole; and Swinburne's failure to use words observantly, so to speak, could not be better exemplified than in the last two lines concerning the lady's "soft, rapid kisses":—

"Felt here about my face, yea here and here,
 Caught on my lips and thrown you back again."

"Thrown" is in the context a ridiculous word.

All through the new poems, however, are many charming lines as when "gentle spring" is addressed:—

"Light butterflies, like flowers alive in air,
 Circling and crowning thy delicious hair."

And we cannot help being attracted by an image in "King Ban":—

"Far back the white lands lay;
 The wind went in them, like a broken man,
 Lamely."

It is an image the charm of which lies in the sound rather than the sense. But that was Swinburne's way. We wish the love of sound had led him to write anything half so pretty in the dialogue, "Pope Celestin and Giordano." Here Swinburne's rhetorical love of words expressing color leads him to make the Pope, referring to a dead woman, say:—

"Alas, the hair she had
 Which now red worms have eaten to the roots!"

And yet a recent writer, in a very able article, contended that Swinburne used words carefully, deliberately weighing the meaning of each before he set it down!

The poems in the present book belong to all periods of Swinburne's life between 1857 and 1907. The most interesting of the undergraduate poems is "The Death of Sir John Franklin," the failure of which to win the Newdigate Prize helped to embitter Swinburne against Oxford for life. Swinburne had previously tried to win the Newdigate with another poem, "The Temple of Janus," no copy of which has survived. Why the poem on the death of Franklin, which contains so much promise of the Swinburnian music, did not win the prize is uncertain. Mr. Gosse suggests that the fact that it was not written in the conventional rhymed couplet may have made it ineligible. "By the will of Sir Roger Newdigate, the only permissible metre was the heroic couplet." Another of the early poems in the book—though its date is uncertain—is a rhetorical "Ode to Mazzini," which is an energetic piece of gesticulation. All that need be said about it is that it is at least gesticulation on the right side. Also, perhaps, that it was no mean rhetorician who wrote such lines as:—

"Too long the world has waited. Day by day
 The noiseless feet of murder pass and stain
 Palace and prison, street and loveliest plain,
 And the slow life of freedom bleeds away . . .
 Still our lost land is beautiful in vein,
 Where priests and kings defile with blood and lies
 The glory of the inviolable skies;
 Still from that loathsome lair," &c., &c.

But there is no need to quote more. The "Ode to Mazzini" is one of those poems which mean as much in the first few lines as they are ever going to mean. To add verses to them is mere beating the air, so far as literature is concerned. Still, the "Ode to Mazzini" does spring out of a generous mood. One prefers it infinitely to the petty malice of "The Ballade of Truthful Charles"—a sneering attack on Parnell, written after Swinburne had become an apostate from the faith of his youth. Here Swinburne begins with a sneer at

"The bards of holy Liarland";

and satirizes the party of Parnell and Major "Willie" Redmond in lines of this kind:—

"Convinced, appalled, confused, unmanned,
 We see, splashed back with mud they fling,
 Parnells and Piggotts lie or stand;
 We see their faith, how pure a thing,
 Their cause, how best all challenging;
 We read their creed, as Gladstiff read it
 And worshipped. Then a word takes wing—
 'I meant to cheat you when I said it.'"

That is poor even of its kind. It is interesting only as an example of the sort of politics professed at "The Pines," under, it is to be feared, the influence of Watts-Dunton. Nor is Swinburne more successful in expressing his personal

than in expressing his political hatreds in light verse. His "Lines to James McNeil (!) Whistler," written in 1888, might be the work of almost any rhymester:—

"Fly away, butterfly, back to Japan,
Tempt not a pinch at the hand of a man,
And strive not to sting ere you die away.
So pert and so painted, so proud and so pretty,
To brush the bright down from your wings were a pity—
Fly away, butterfly, fly away!"

The light verse in the book also includes two parodies, one on Swinburne himself and one on Tennyson. The latter is a Tennysonian monologue put in the mouth of a woman who agreed to commit suicide along with her husband, both of them having been converted from Free Thought to Calvinism, and having, as a result, become utterly miserable. They take poison: the man dies, but the woman is restored to life with a stomach-pump. The theme begins:—

"Pills? talk to me of your pills? Well, that, I must say,
is cool.
Can't bring my old man round? he was always a stubborn
old fool.
If I hadn't taken precautions—a warning to all that wife—
He might not have been dead, and I might not have been
alive.

"You would like to know, if I please, how it was that our
troubles began?
You see, we were brought up Agnostics, I and my poor
old man.
And we got some idea of selection and evolution, you
know—
Professor Huxley's doing—where does he expect to go!"

Even this, however, fails to surpass what a score of other parodists have done in the same kind.

Nor are we inclined to take as enthusiastic a view of the Border Ballads with which the book opens as Mr. Gosse does. Mr. Gosse thinks that Swinburne must have withheld these from publication only because, in the days of Rossetti and Morris, there was a prejudice against ballads which had not "a pre-Raphaelite coloring or costume." Swinburne, he contends, was too good an imitator of the real thing to please Rossetti and Morris: and he tells us how, when Morris was dying, he began to make a selection of ballads for the Kelmscott Press, and, how, requiring an assistant to edit the book, he refused to consider Swinburne, saying: "Oh, no! that would never do. He would be writing in verses that no one would be able to tell from the original stuff!" Swinburne certainly wrote the ballad idiom, but he did not possess the ballad vision. His ballads are to some extent like real ballads, but they are like real mediocre ballads. They have vigor of action, but there is no natural distress in them, no marking of little incidents like the loss of a heel from a shoe. The old ballads, like the great plays, were born out of wonder at life. Swinburne's ballads, at the best, are born out of wonder at literature. They are dilettante work, as Scott's ballad-work was not. Swinburne gives us no opening line with the magic of Scott's

"Mary Hamilton's to the kirk gane."

He muddles the imagination rather than makes pictures for it in verse such as those which describe the capture of the wicked wizard, Lord Soulis:—

"They have taken that strong wizard
To bind him by the hands:
The links of airn braist off his body
Like sprints of bursten birken wands.

"And they have taken that keen wizard
To bind him by the hause-bane;
The links of airn braist off his body
As blossom that is burst wi' rain.

"And they have taken that foul wizard
To bind him by the feet:
The links of iron braist off his body
As berries that are burst with heat."

"The Worm of Spindlestoneheugh" is a good ballad of its kind—a good literary exercise. "The Earl of Mar's Daughter," an incomplete ballad, has something of the simple beauty of the real thing. Here, Mr. Gosse suggests, Swinburne was setting himself the task of recomposing a ballad that had been modernized and vulgarized and restoring it to language more severely archaic. Swinburne, however, will not be remembered for his ballads or his reconstructions of ballads. These are merely the triflings of a man of genius. As such they are worth collecting. But they are not worth praising excessively.

INDIGNATION.

"The Old Huntsman and Other Poems." By SEIGFRIED SASSOON. (Heinemann. 5s. net.)

ALL things considered, Mr. Sassoon's poems must have been a shock to polite circles. A young officer, extremely well connected, brings out a neat volume of verse. A few war-impressions are enshrined, like speckled eggs, within a furry nest of seemly Nature-poems. One of these poems is dedicated to Mr. Edmund Gosse, whose opinion as to the medicinale and disinfectant properties of blood (Condy's fluid, was it not?) has been one of the most famous literary (was not Sir Thomas Browne a doctor?) contributions to the war. And it was not as if Mr. Sassoon had not a large number of exemplary precedents to broaden down from. Not all the war-poems of the last two and a-half years have been written by journalists; many of them have been written by soldiers whose actual experience of modern warfare has yet not been sufficient to displace the standards of Bond Street. So that Mr. Sassoon has really had no presentable excuse for not writing what was expected of him, except one, and that is the excuse of the truth. And by truth we do not mean realism. Realism is not objectionable; on the contrary, it is fashionable. But truth, and truth about the actual conditions of the war, is objectionable, because of the deadly criticism that, like the dagger under a cloak, underlies it. Realism in modern English letters has been one of the supreme artistic failures of this generation. This is not the place to go into the causes of that failure; but one of them surely is just this lack of intense, explosive criticism that truth, drawn into the sovereign allegiance of art, carries as its inevitable passenger. Realism paralyzes art, because its very hypothesis prevents the artistic leaven from working upon and transforming the bare material. Truthful art, on the other hand, has the utmost liberty of imposing its own laws and its own methods upon the raw and helpless substance that it shapes.

It is necessary to make this distinction, because in every review of Mr. Sassoon's verse that the present writer has seen, he has been labelled as a realist. And he is nothing of the kind. That he has worked his subject-matter into the serene and beautiful form of literature, would certainly be an exaggeration. But the point is that that has patently never been Mr. Sassoon's intention. It is no reflection upon him to say that these war-verses are not poetry, that they have nothing to do with poetry, because we dare venture that he would probably agree with us. Nor are they (to go to the other extreme) simply a convenient instrument for vehement rhetoric and declamation. In a word, they are epigrams—modern epigrams, thrown deliberately into the harsh, peremptory, colloquial kind of versification which we have so often mistaken for poetry. And, to our mind, Mr. Sassoon is quite right to select this method to fulfil a purpose in which every line throbs and of which every line is acutely conscious. For into this epigrammatic content, he is able to discharge the hot fluid of honest rage and scorn, heartfelt bitterness and indignation, which must read so very unconventionally, so very disagreeably, to those civilians who have been comfortably nurtured upon the war-poem of the past. And how well this developed and adapted form of epigram bears the weight of its author's individual driving-force! Here are some examples:—

"Propped on a stick he viewed the August weald;
Squat orchard trees and oasts with painted cowls;
A homely tangled hedge, a corn-stooked field,
With sound of barking dogs and roving fowls.

"He hobbled blithely through the garden gate,
And thought: 'Thank God they had to amputate.'"
From "Conscripts":—

"They gasped and sweated, marching up and down,
I drilled them till they cursed my raucous shout.
Love chucked his lute away and dropped his crown;
Rhyme got sore heels and wanted to fall out.
'Left, right! Press on your butts!' They looked at me
Reproachful; how I longed to set them free!"

"They":—

"The Bishop tells us: 'When the boys come back
They will not be the same; for they'll have fought
In a just cause: they lead the last attack
On Anti-Christ; their comrades' blood has bought
New right to breed an honorable race.
They have challenged Death and dared him face to face.'

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 And Bert's gone syphilitic: you'll not find
 A chap who's served that 'hasn't found some change.'
 And the Bishop said: 'The ways of God are strange!'"

"Blighters":—

"The House is crammed: tier beyond tier they grin
 And cackle at the Show, while prancing ranks
 Of harlots shrill the chorus, drunk with din;
 'We're sure the Kaiser loves the dear old Tanks!'"

"I'd like to see a Tank come down the stalls,
 Lurching to rag-time tunes, and 'Home, sweet home,'—
 And there'd be no more jokes in music-halls
 To mock the riddled corpses round Bapaume."

From "In the Pink":—

"So Davies wrote: 'This leaves me in "the pink,"'
 Then scrawled his name: 'Your loving sweetheart, Willie.'"

"And then he thought: To-morrow night we trudge
 Up to the trenches, and my boots are rotten.
 Five miles of stodgy clay and freezing sludge,
 And everything but wretchedness forgotten.
 To-night he's in the pink; but soon he'll die.
 And still the war goes on; he don't know why."

We have quoted liberally from these epigrams for three reasons. In the first place because this experiment in a modern and expanded form of an old literary device ought to interest everybody concerned in saving our literature from the shams and rottenness that encumber it; in the second place, because the fierce wind of disdain and pity that sweeps through these verses is sweeter than glory and Condy's Fluid; and, thirdly, because they are being ignored in favor of Mr. Sassoon's other work. That work, though not negligible, is no more distinguished than we should expect from an intelligent and promising young poet. But the war-verses, though by no means the fruit of genius, are dignified by the truth of anger and suffering that swells them, to a power which should not only do us good but the sincerity and self-respect of letters as well.

THE AVERAGE.

"In Mio's Youth." By JANE BARLOW. (Hutchinson. 6s.)
 "Myola." By H. MUSGRAVE. (Hodder & Stoughton. 5s. net.)
 "A Bid for Victory." By HERBERT STERRING. (Nash. 5s. net.)

Nothing seems to affect the novel. The world may burst into space like a broken bottle, but the novel continues—sedate, unfurried, self-sufficient, commonplace, like a spinster of means living in a cathedral town and well-connected with the clergy. The war has positively no effect on it whatever. This incredibly assimilative form of entertainment simply absorbs it, and proceeds upon its placid way. In fact, the war bolsters it up; it is cast into the tail of the book as a makeweight, as a providential means of disposing of characters, winding up situations and dispensing with the proper end to the troublesome complications of an unruly plot. And the reason of this is purely the devotion of the novel to the average. That average is the one unconquerable phenomenon that is unaffected by circumstance. The average is a kind of negative force which attracts to itself a vast number of floating units, coheres them into a solid mass, and breaks everything that collides with it as a hostile body. It is like a highwayman, or a bad government, or militarism—you must either give into it or be given up to it. In fact, nothing seems able so much as to chip its iron surface—except posterity, which destroys it. Unfortunately, posterity imposes a condition upon us which we can in no wise evade, namely, that we shall not be there to see what it can do. And so, there is no escaping the average for the living. We may threaten or scorn it, rage or bluster at it; but it sits in high places and smiles.

This little preface is certainly inspired by the three novels before us. And it comes in very usefully, because the most difficult thing in the world is to write about an average book. The most contemptible or the most exalted, the most rapid or the most abstruse volume does offer some vantage point to the reviewer; but with the average he is compelled, if he has to write his column, to write in the air. That

he is not interested does not matter; the point is (reviewing being the most selfless and disinterested occupation in the world) that he cannot understand how anybody else should be interested. And so he is paralyzed. Yet this may seem unduly hard upon Miss Barlow, whose literary past is a sufficient acquittal of any idolatry for the average, and whose recent death has deprived literature of a poetess of remarkable, and a prose-writer of considerable, power. But in this novel she (in the polite phrase of the book-review) is not herself. The publisher is really quite right about the book. "Her present novel," he says, "deals with an Irish family of limited means, into which Mio, the heroine of the story, is introduced. She is sensitive, of fine clay, and out of harmony with these people, but later is made happy with a lover and good friends." Yes, so she is; and there, without much regret, we are inclined to leave her. For we should have been more concerned with Mio's environment if we could have felt more keenly about Mio. And Mio, pleasant enough for a visit, is less absorbing when we have to follow her career from about three years old to eighteen. Miss Barlow has not, indeed, written this novel with a sure hand. It is curiously inert, and in many places is not far from being downright tedious, which is the very last thing one should expect from so genuine, so independent, and so delicate a literary personality.

We are awed at the outset by being informed that Mr. or Miss Musgrave has won a £300 prize by writing "Myola." Without presuming to question the critical basis of such an award, we may yet inquire what particular quality of authorship has passed the author Al. Personally, we should have handed over the money for the remarkable power displayed of "piling on the agony." Poor Myola has had a terrific past before we have read ten pages. When her cousin comes upon her burying her father in a lonely New Zealand settlement, she has been already deserted by her lover, and her child killed by her drunken and reprobate father. The cousin fetches her back to England and sets her up on a fine estate. There she meets the ex-lover, who is a lord. After "conversations," as the diplomatists say, she flees back to New Zealand and dies of a broken heart. That is all. The book is quite an honest piece of work, but we do feel that a matter of three hundred pages is a longish period for Myola's heart to crack.

The part that keeps the eyes on the page in "A Bid for Victory" is that in which a couple of old sea-dogs (over seventy each) capture the very latest German submarine, and sail up the Rhine with it, with the intention of blowing up the bridges and simultaneously telephoning to the Allies to begin an offensive. There is no academic strategy about that. But one Daphne, who is quite sure that England has never done anything wrong and never will do any wrong, and one Arnold, a scientific superman, who orates like a politician and is of opinion that Dickens was the author of "Vanity Fair"—they are not indispensable to our enjoyment.

BOOKS IN BRIEF

"The Soul of France." By REUBEN SAILLENS, D.D. (Morgan & Scott. 5s. net.)

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The Week in the City.

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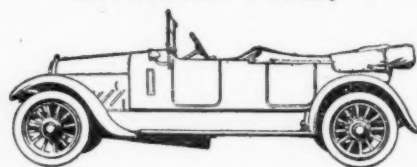
ALGOMA CENTRAL REORGANIZATION.

THE report of the Bondholders' Committee of the Algoma Central and Hudson Bay Railway and Algoma Central Terminals states that the scheme of arrangement agreed to in the early part of last year, has now been made effective, and makes a distinct improvement in bondholders' prospects. As a result of operations under the receivership, there is a surplus in hand of £124,000, after paying in full the interest on the Equipment Trust Bonds and the 3 per cent. interest payable to the bondholders of the Terminal Company for the year ended August 31st, 1915. This sum, however, is subject to provisions for depreciation and contingencies, which will have to be on a big scale for "it has been impossible during the receivership to keep the property in first-class condition owing to labor and material difficulties." A strong board has been elected, and accounts are to be presented as at June 30th in each year. Over £200,000, which was on deposit in Canada, has been temporarily invested in high-class securities, and revenue is said to be improving. The committee are of the opinion, however, that all available funds should be held in Canada to provide for depreciation, renewals, repairs, and contingencies, and that no further payment on the bonds of the Terminals Company or of the Railway Company should be made at present. Reorganization is proceeding, "but it cannot be completed, nor can serious development be undertaken and largely increased traffics expected until the war is ended." It is obvious, therefore, that cash resources must be strictly conserved.

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